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THE SPHERE

Vol. CLXIII No. 2135 — WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE GRAPHIC — DECEMBER 21 1940

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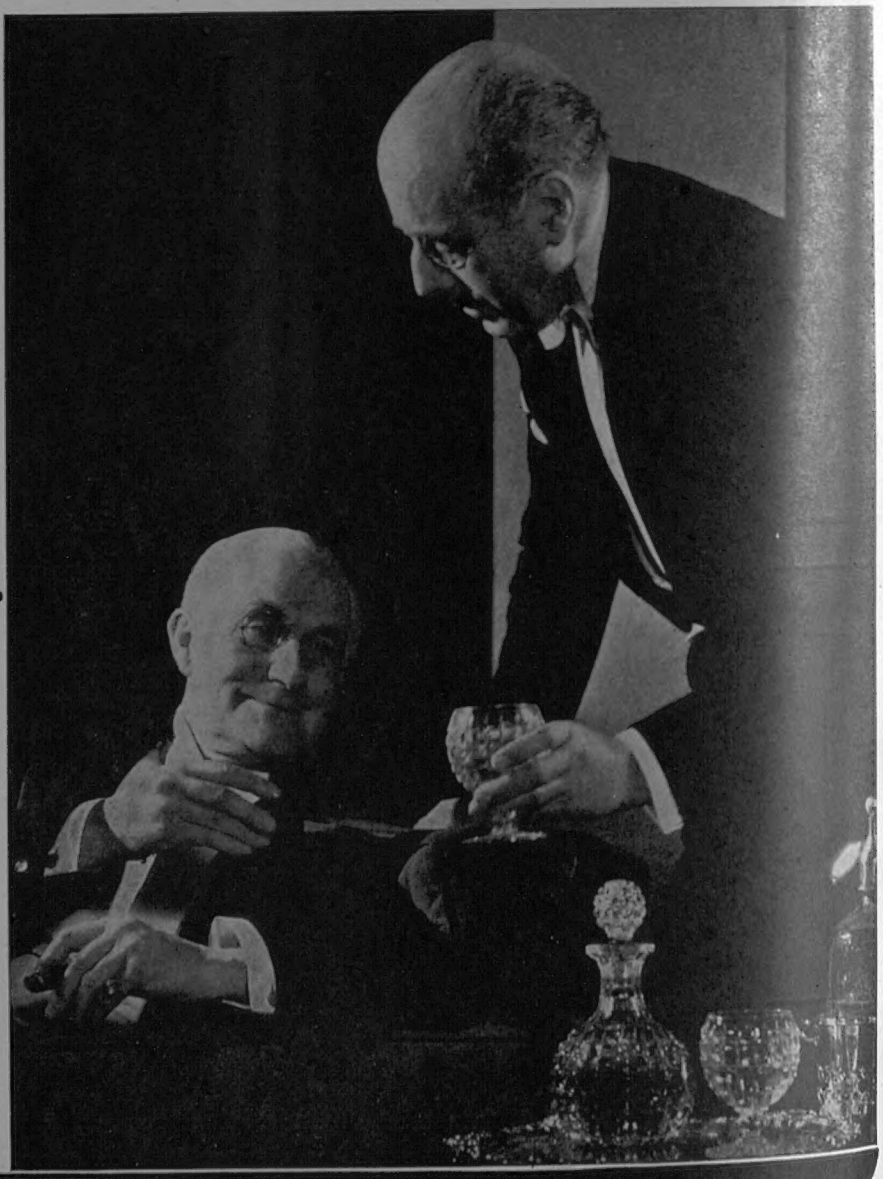

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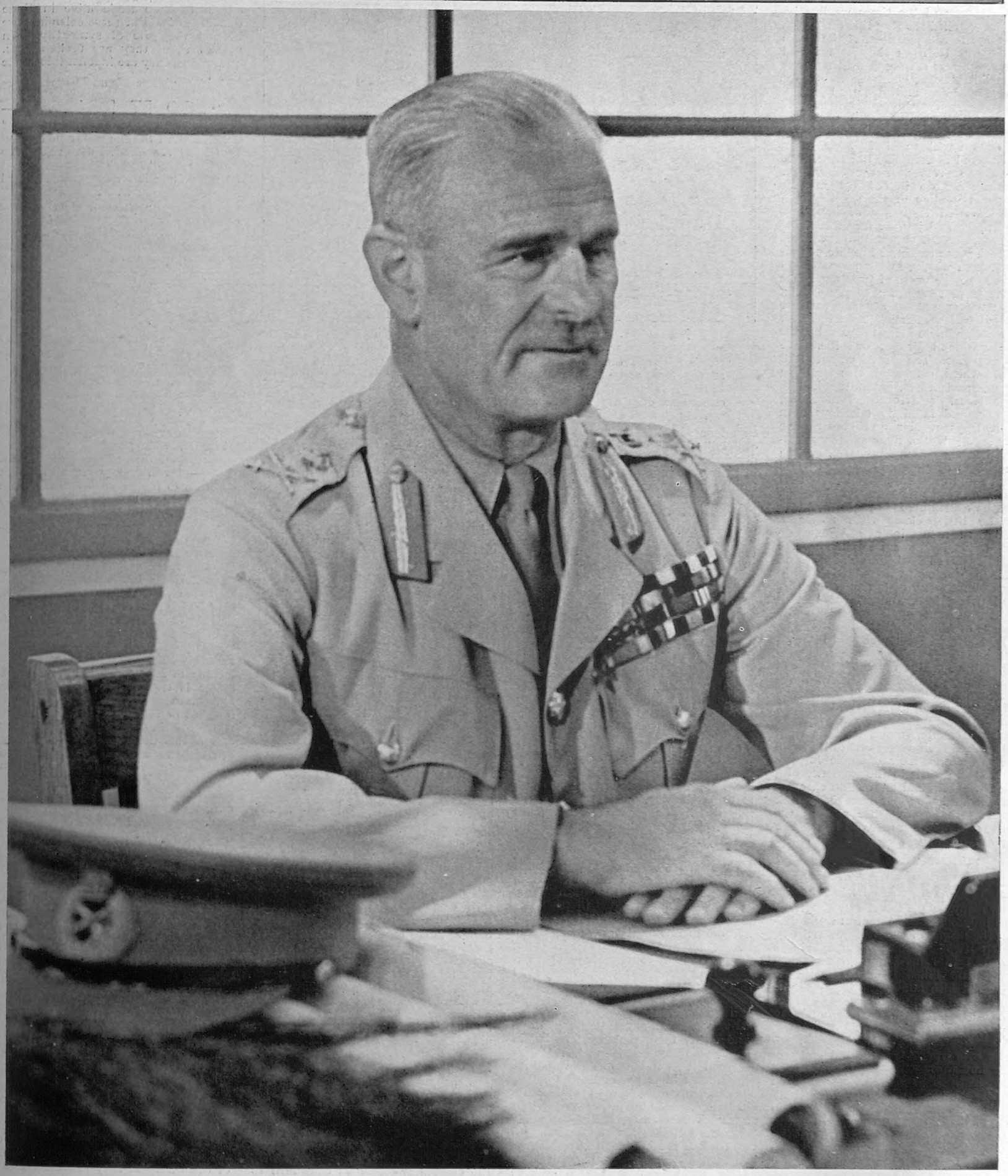
The Empire's Illustrated Weekly
London, December 21, 1940



BRITAIN'S COMMANDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Man who Planned the Campaign Against the Italians in the Western Desert

GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD PERCIVAL WAVELL, C.-in-C., Middle East since the opening of hostilities, is the brain behind the present campaign in the Western Desert. Military observers all over the world are comparing his methods and tactics with the leading Commanders of History; the daring conception of his strategy and the speed and thoroughness with which his plans have been carried through are evidence of the working of a first-class military genius. General Wavell has been in Egypt uninterruptedly since his appointment; his Army career has been a distinguished one, and his knowledge of Egypt, Palestine and other places in the Middle East encyclopædic. He is supported by other first-class generals, notably Lieut.-General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, C.-in-C., Egypt; Major-General R. N. O'Connor, in actual command in the Western Desert; and Air Commodore Collishaw, in command of the R.A.F.

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A WAR NEWSLETTER—No. 68

32-34, ST. BRIDE STREET, E.C.4

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS?

—In wishing readers a happy Christmas, I do not write the words in callous forgetfulness of the times we live in. If the church bells ring this Christmas morning it will mean—that the Nazis have landed on our shores. I poised the pen before setting down the words which habit has endeared to me for fourteen long and troubled years. That fact about the church bells puts the thing in a nutshell. It is not Peace but a sword. Is there anything *in* such a wish to-day? I am not a good hand at sermons, but experience proves to every man over fifty that moral saws do indeed contain the essential wisdom of the ages. When the outward trappings of happiness and peace and joy are torn away, the old saws enjoin us not to despair but to seek those treasures in more permanent form within, in our hearts. And first as to the outward trappings. For some of us they are gone completely. Of those spared the supreme sacrifice many have lost their means of livelihood, their stimulus to living life usefully, the colour which their craft or calling gave to existence. The most fortunate lead a life which, compared with anything experienced before, is straitened, dull, colourless, restricted, dangerous, dreary, and infinitely laborious even if it lacks regular and constructive employment. For mere existence (eating, keeping reasonably warm, passing the hours of light and darkness) is a heavy and ceaseless struggle. And for every one of us the prospect of sudden death or maiming is brought (by much or by little) closer than normally. What, then, sustains us? Whence do we derive forces and impulses which insidiously succeed in binding us to life, in keeping us interested—yes, in preserving many of our finer qualities and perceptions, and all those attributes, artifices and expedients by means of which we make life bearable, if not always a coloured and interesting and useful page? Hope sustains us, faith sustains us, the example of our nobler neighbours sustains us. We march in the company of heroes and of many unselfish men and women, and a few saints. They are for the most part anonymous, but the right names for their virtues ring all day in our ears and their example inspires us. Our faith is in the existence of a God who sees and knows and executes justice at last. Our hope is in that justice, that providence and in the virtues of our own race and in the star of our destiny.

THE JUDGMENT OF GOD AND MAN.—

I wonder how many people can clearly remember the judgment of the neutral world during the height of the civil war in Spain, when two factions of one nation bombed to ruins the glories of their cities and killed in thousands their innocent kith and kin. A phrase was coined and accepted all over the world, and that phrase was contemptuously applied to Spaniards. That war was "the greatest example of mass madness ever revealed in the history of the human race." None questioned the truth of the phrase—not even those nations whose "volunteer" armies helped one side or the other in the foul and frightful work of insensate destruction. For then (as now) the common man in the nations of Europe preferred peace to war and security to aggression, and on the whole believed that—however much injustice and hardship kept them down—political honesty and respect for the written promise was the best—indeed, the only—way in which peace, security and a measure of civilisation could be preserved. Right up to 1939 indeed the common man in every European nation believed that international grievances could be settled by arbitration and that patent injustices would in time yield to the weight of world opinion and moral condemnation. None had anything to gain, all had everything to lose, by war. In 1939 all the nations of Europe (save one) had graduated by the most bitter

TEACHING THE NAVAL CADETS TO DANCE: Naval Cadets in training at their evacuation mansion pick their partners in the best "may I have this one, please?" style for a dance with the A.T.S. girls, a company of which, at the invitation of the Captain Superintendent of the Cadets' Training College, is teaching the Cadets to dance. This added item on the curriculum does not seem to be a burden to these Admirals in the making!

experiences in their history to a degree of civilisation which morally condemned the black spots of aggression in their own past and saw war for the futility and crime it is. One nation alone (and only a small part of it) had not learned the lesson, was behind all the rest in that vital evolution to modern civilisation. Who could believe during the Spanish civil war that that unbelievable example of mass-madness would in a few months envelop all Europe and that, while 95 per cent. of the whole population of Europe loathed war and thanked God for every manifestation of appeasement, the schemes and vanity of half-a-dozen men should plunge the whole European race in an orgy of blood and destruction, of terror and rapine and famine and misery, compared with which the Spanish tragedy would rank as a street brawl?

THE IMPOSSIBLE.—

But so it was. Here this Christmas the races of Europe—one in their common loathing of war, one in suffering—live the lives which cavemen would have rejected as impossible and unbearable, without security for life or possessions, without a roof to cover their heads as often as not, denied many of the bare alleviations of existence enjoyed in the dark ages. If a prophet had painted in 1938 this macabre picture of what life would become in civilised Europe two years hence, he and it would have been laughed out of court. Many men expected a great war; none conceived that the Spanish tragedy was but mass-madness in microcosm, a little thumb-nail sketch of a trifling detail in a vast canvas of horror yet to be painted. And many more than the number of men who expected a world war realised that, if it came, it would be the work and responsibility of half-a-dozen men, gambling with the destinies of hundreds of millions. Because that apex of imbecility reached by the European civilisation of the twentieth century seemed to them beyond their wildest, maddest imagining, they put aside as impossible the nightmare which they had vaguely conceived and vaguely dreaded. Men, born free (they admitted) were everywhere in fetters, but that fettered slaves should without a stroke or effort yield their souls and bodies to the torture and the rack of a handful of gaolers—half-a-dozen uneducated men against a thousand million in every degree of culture and bodily and mental strength—*that* was a possibility beyond the power of even a diseased brain to conceive or accept. Yet here we are this Christmas! Since the first Christmas the peoples of the world have walked in darkness. Since the first Christmas they have cried out on Christmas morning with a faint note of triumph that they had seen a great light. Is this the darkest Christmas in the history of Christianity and Civilisation? In the centuries gone by since the Birth at Bethlehem has the anniversary ever dawned in a sky so dark; have the peoples of the earth ever waked and walked in darkness so profound?

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING.—

I have felt sorry for the shopkeepers ever since August. Their lot has been hard and their difficulties great. I felt we were justified in relaxing the ban on spending in a small way at least for the benefit of the children at Christmas. So I wrote to two famous London toy-shops, who have my peacetime patronage, and asked them early in December to send me their catalogues. Though both firms were advertising in the Press, neither of them showed interest in my enquiry. No catalogues came within reasonable time. It is waste of time and money to stimulate an enquiry which you are not prepared to satisfy—that is the first law of commercial advertising. It struck me that these famous firms have allowed themselves to fall too much under the weather. If we may not as good citizens in war travel to the shops, the shops must come to us through the post, and if they won't trouble to do that, we cannot help them. There remained those cold impersonal or utilitarian gifts, the postal order, the savings bank credit, the book token. Opinions among donees differ concerning the comparative merits of chosen toys and promissory notes. Some say that the charm of buying makes the former more valuable. Others say that fear of appearing mean compels the donor to increase the value of a gift made in terms of £ s. d. In my experience, a counter or a shop catalogue costs me more at Christmas than generosity by cheque-book.

STILL THEY COME.—

But the Christmas calendars continued to come in. Enclosed in enormous envelopes, these tiresome, unusable, outrageous reproductions of water-colours or oils, hackneyed or amateur, were delivered by the postmen at scores of houses. They were sent with the compliments of small local firms and carried tear-off calendars of the months. The reproductions are usually done on satin and the whole device is often 2 ft. high by 1½ ft. wide. Sometimes one sees them hung up in garages, very rarely they find their way into cottages. The bulk are scrapped as soon as received, being remarkable neither for taste nor utility. It is a monstrous waste of paper and a misdirected effort of trade propaganda, and it might usefully have been prevented by a regulation limiting the size of such postal packets. There is every reason for sympathy and encouragement of reasonable efforts to keep trade alive in these difficult days. But these calendars are beyond the pale of sympathy. In normal times they are useless junk. In wartime they are indefensible waste and fatuity.

"EGO ET REX . . ."—

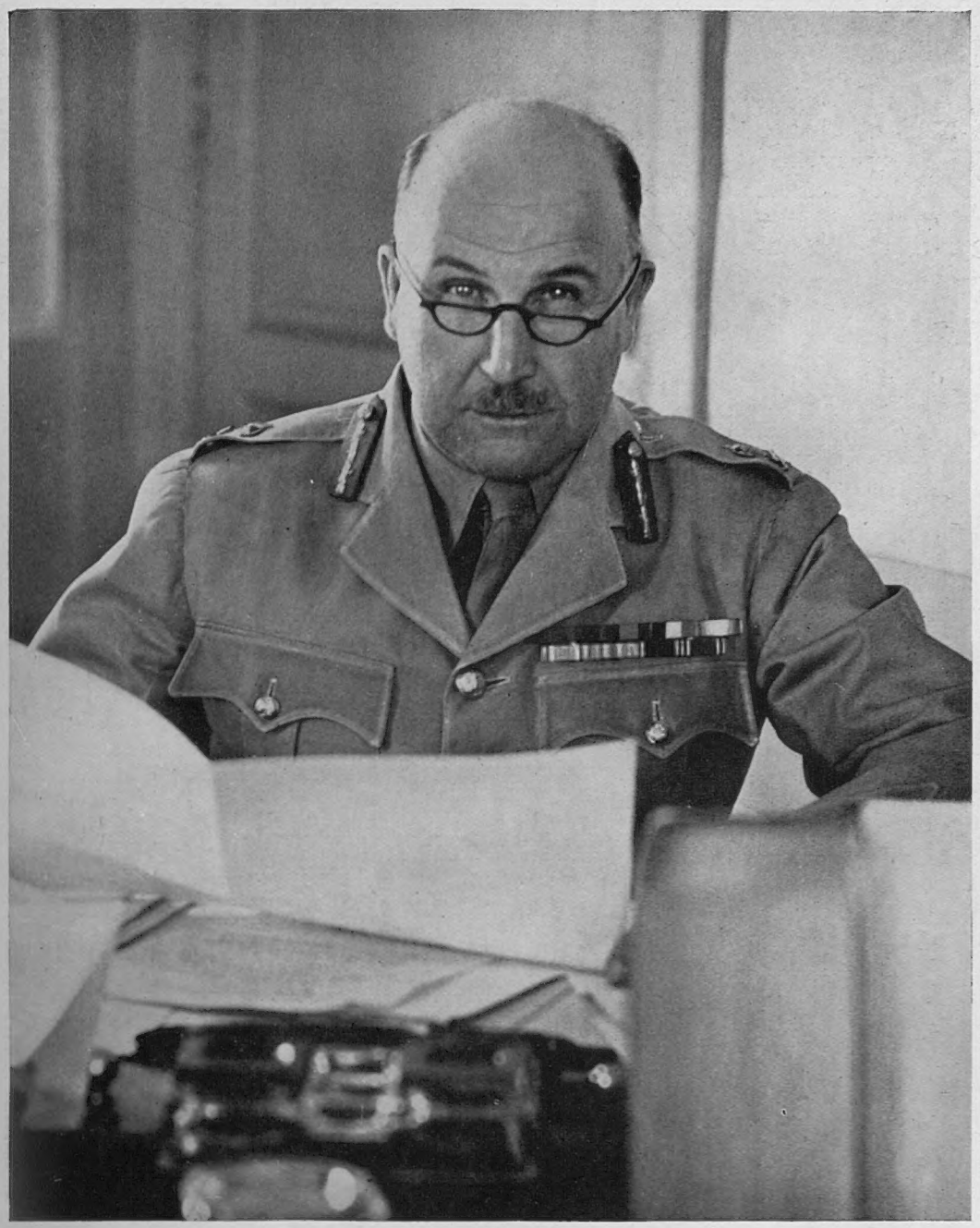
Sometimes, even now, when I read extracts from the speeches or decrees of Hitler and Mussolini, I am brought up short by that "Ego." "They say that I have an inferiority complex in regard to the British. . . . They are mad." (Hitler's Berlin speech.) Or "In the name of the King and by order of the Duce. . . ." It is Wolsey's *Ego et rex meus*—that disastrous, if grammatically correct, Latin form, which brought an earlier dictator to "fall like Lucifer, never to rise again." It ought not to surprise me. It is perfectly understood by the whole world how completely personal is the rule of Hitler and, to a lesser degree, of Mussolini. But still the wonder sometimes rises again when one takes note of these signs of the complete dictatorship over the souls of millions which these evil and in many ways mediocre men enjoy. One cannot imagine Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Churchill—who have unusually wide powers for the heads or chief Ministers of democratic States—devoting any time in public speeches to their own personalities, or referring to themselves in any way other than as representatives of their nations or impersonal instruments of Government. We are, of course, immensely interested in the personality of our leaders. The most trivial characteristics interest us, down to an addiction to cigars or a penchant for bricklaying; but it would petrify us if they themselves made reference to their personal characteristics in public speeches. It may seem a trivial point to make here and now, yet it is not lacking in importance. For its implication is tremendous. It implies no less than this: that a nation of ninety millions or fifty millions has hung its whole destiny on a single tin-tack, and if that tin-tack contains a fault or cannot for any reason or any length of time support the weight of responsibility, the whole mighty mass falls like Lucifer. The dictator and the nation crash into the abyss together. But under democratic Government, no man is indispensable. Mr. Churchill is an invaluable leader. We feel we could not spare him to-day. Yet, if we lost him, we know that his place could and would be filled adequately and that the nation's life and purpose would not be vitally weakened. Every dictatorship hangs by a thread. It is a comforting and significant thought for to-day. Hitler's, Mussolini's "cosmos is all Ego." Their new order is all Ego. But, more significant and a little less obvious, the Ego of Hitler is all the Cosmos which his Reich can claim.

ERRATA.—

Once more, part of the "copy" of last week's issue was mislaid in the post. The first two or three paragraphs were rewritten and *telephoned* to London. Pity the poor journalist in wartime! Telephoning "copy" (whether under an *Alert* or no) means hard slogging at each end of the wire. It may provide readers, who knew the facts, with a pleasant Christmas game to re-read No. 67 and try to find what were the originals of the astonishing mis-hearings printed in the first two paragraphs as a result of that fearful game of Russian Scandal played by myself at one end and a courageous lady at the other end of a wire. Author and printer at least must be acquitted. I won't apologise. War is war and readers may have excused me on the ground that I was intoxicated by evidence of Heaven's judgment on the assassin, Mussolini. And a very good reason for a little lapse in such circumstances and at Christmas! THE OLD STAGER

THE MEN IN EGYPT

The British Commanders who have Carried Out the Operations Against the Italians



LEADER OF THE BRITISH TROOPS—Lieut.-General Sir H. Maitland Wilson, Commander-in-Chief in Egypt : Six feet tall, burly and rubicund, General Wilson is known to the Army of the Nile as "Jumbo." He and his chief, General Wavell, are "intellectuals" as well as soldiers, with well-stored, fertile minds. General Wilson was appointed to his present command last year after having been Commander of the 2nd Division at Aldershot. He saw service in both the South African and the 1914-18 wars, and has also served as G.S.O.1 at the Camberley Staff College. General Wilson is just under sixty years of age and was educated at Eton. He has personally supervised many of the detail arrangements for the attack in the Western Desert

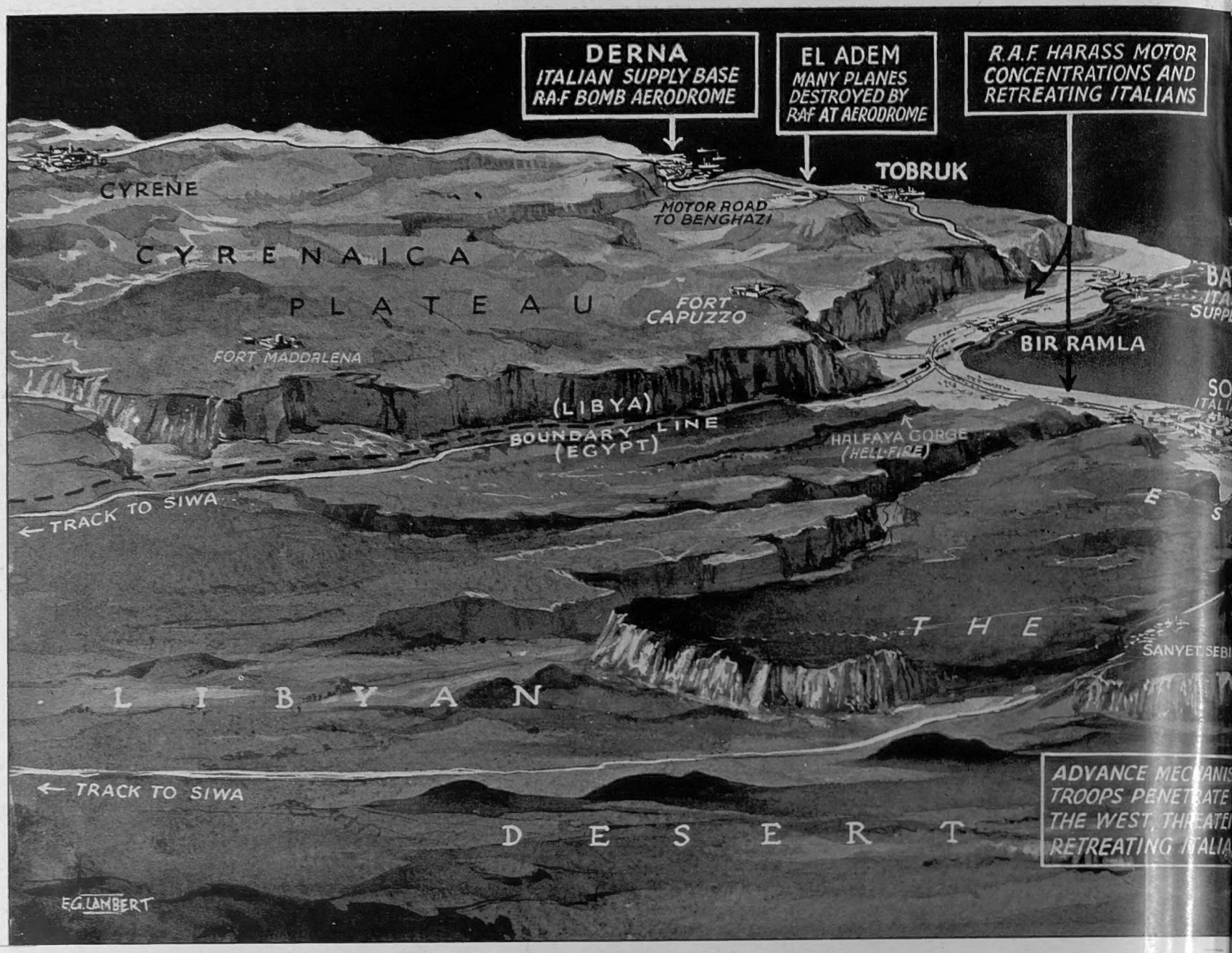
THE COMMANDER IN THE WESTERN DESERT—Major-General Richard Nugent O'Connor, who actually directed the assaults on the Italians in the Sidi Barrani attacks. He is fifty-one years of age and is a product of Wellington College and Sandhurst. He fought in the 1914-18 war and was awarded the Italian Silver Medal for Valour ! He has since served in the War Office, and as Commander of the Peshawar Brigade in India. During 1938-39 he was Military Governor of Jerusalem

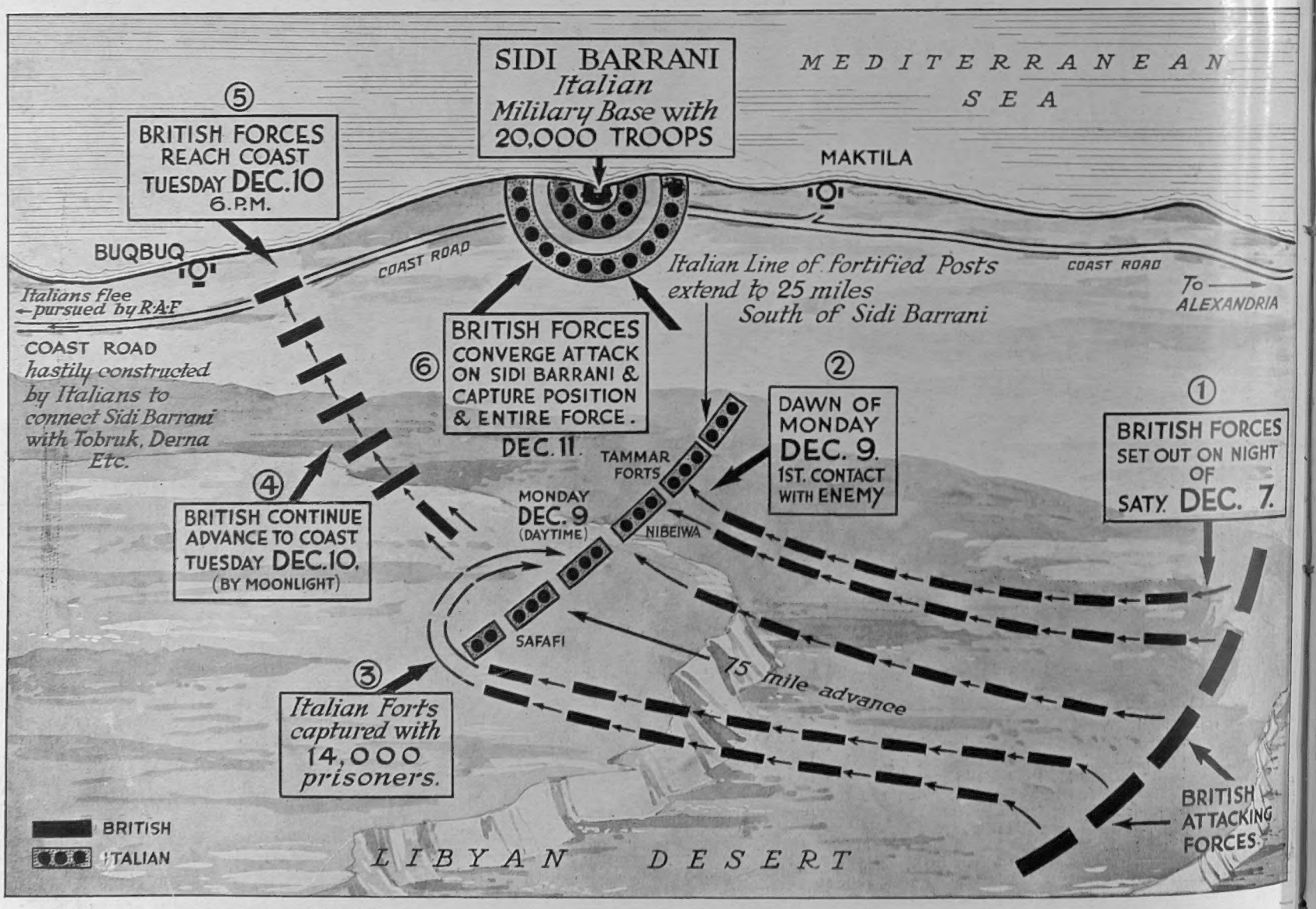
THE MAN WHO STOPPED THE DAYLIGHT ATTACKS ON LONDON—Air Vice-Marshal K. R. Park, who has just been awarded the C.B. by the King. He has been in command of the fighter R.A.F. who defended London and the South-East during the heavy attacks by the German *Luftwaffe* since September last. He is forty-eight years of age and fought as a pilot in the last war. Before returning to England he directed operations against the *Luftwaffe* during the Dunkirk evacuation

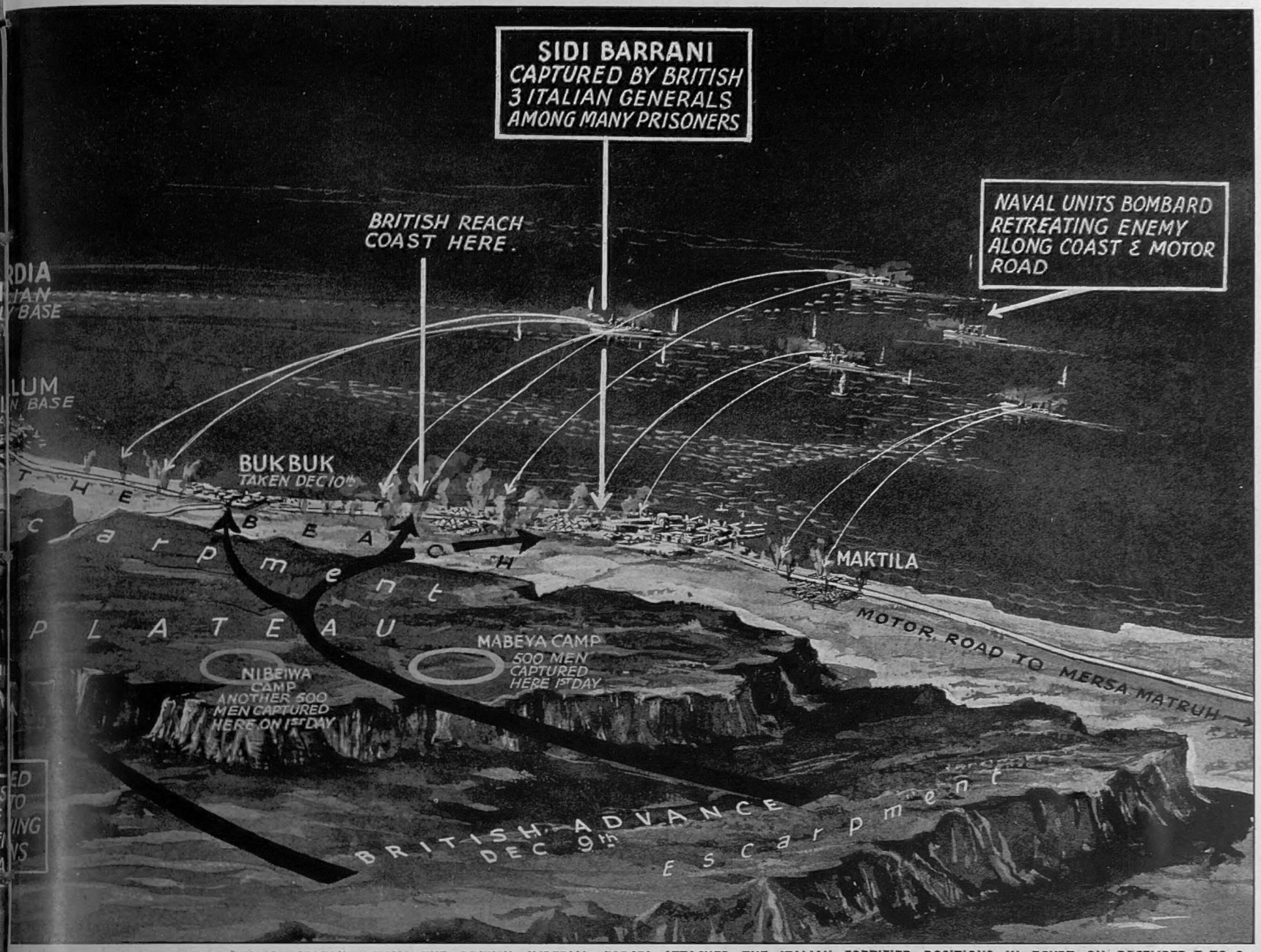
AIR VICE-MARSHAL A. W. TEDDER, C.B., NOW APPOINTED SECOND IN COMMAND TO SIR ARTHUR LONGMORE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

IN COMMAND OF THE R.A.F. IN EGYPT—Air Commodore Raymond Collishaw : Forty-seven years of age, Air Commodore Collishaw was born in Canada. He entered the R.N.A.S. in 1915 ; and has seen service with the R.A.F. in Egypt, South Russia, North Persia, Iraq, and as senior R.A.F. Officer in H.M.S. *Courageous*

On left—
Air Vice-Marshal A. W. Tedder, C.B., who has been appointed Second-in-Command to Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Longmore, in the Middle East—*vice* unlucky Air Vice-Marshal O. T. Boyd, who was captured by the Italians in Sicily—is one of the most experienced all-round officers in the R.A.F. He did very well as a pilot and leader of fighting men in the last war, and although very good as such, he displayed a fondness for technical affairs which threatened at times to turn him into an engineer rather than an administrative or operational officer. On the other hand, he has remarkable ability as a Staff officer. He was at the Imperial Defence College years ago. Then he was No. 1 to Air Marshal Bowhill, when he was Air Member for Personnel. After that he was appointed to command the R.A.F. at Singapore, where the job was mostly concerned with flying-boats and torpedo-bombers


DERNA
ITALIAN SUPPLY BASE
RAF BOMB AERODROME
EL ADEM
MANY PLANES DESTROYED BY RAF AT AERODROME
R.A.F. HARASS MOTOR CONCENTRATIONS AND RETREATING ITALIANS
TOBRUK
CYRENE
MOTOR ROAD TO BENGHAZI
CYRENAICA
PLATEAU
FORT CAPUZZO
FORT MADDALENA
BIR RAMLA
(LIBYA)
BOUNDARY LINE
(EGYPT)
HALFAYA GORGE
(HELL-FIRE)
TRACK TO SIWA
THE
LIBYAN
DESERT
SANYET SEBI
ADVANCE MECHANIS
TROOPS PENETRATE
THE WEST, THREATE
RETREATING ITALIA
TRACK TO SIWA
E.G. LAMBERT


SIDI BARRANI
Italian
Mililary Base with
20,000 TROOPS
MEDITERRANEAN
SEA
⑤
BRITISH FORCES
REACH COAST
TUESDAY DEC.10
6.P.M.
MAKTILA
BUQBUQ
COAST ROAD
Italians flee
←pursued by R.A.F
Italian Line of fortified Posts
extend to 25 miles
South of Sidi Barrani
COAST ROAD
To
ALEXANDRIA
⑥
BRITISH FORCES
CONVERGE ATTACK
ON SIDI BARRANI &
CAPTURE POSITION
& ENTIRE FORCE.
DEC. 11
COAST ROAD
hastily constructed
by Italians to
connect Sidi Barrani
with Tobruk, Derna
Etc.
②
DAWN OF
MONDAY
DEC. 9.
1ST. CONTACT
WITH ENEMY
①
BRITISH FORCES
SET OUT ON NIGHT
OF
SATY. DEC. 7.
TAMMAR
FORTS
④
BRITISH CONTINUE
ADVANCE TO COAST
TUESDAY DEC.10.
(BY MOONLIGHT)
MONDAY
DEC. 9
(DAYTIME)
NIBEIWA
SAFAFI
75 mile advance
③
Italian Forts
captured with
14,000
prisoners.
BRITISH
ITALIAN
BRITISH
ATTACKING
FORCES
LIBYAN DESERT



"THE ROUT OF AN ENTIRE ITALIAN ARMY": HOW THE BRITISH IMPERIAL FORCES ATTACKED THE ITALIAN FORTIFIED POSITIONS IN EGYPT ON DECEMBER 7 TO 9, AND BY A BRILLIANT TURNING MOVEMENT CAPTURED SOME 30,000 PRISONERS AND IMMENSE BOOTY AND ROUTED THE WHOLE ASSEMBLED ENEMY FORCES

VICTORY in LIBYA

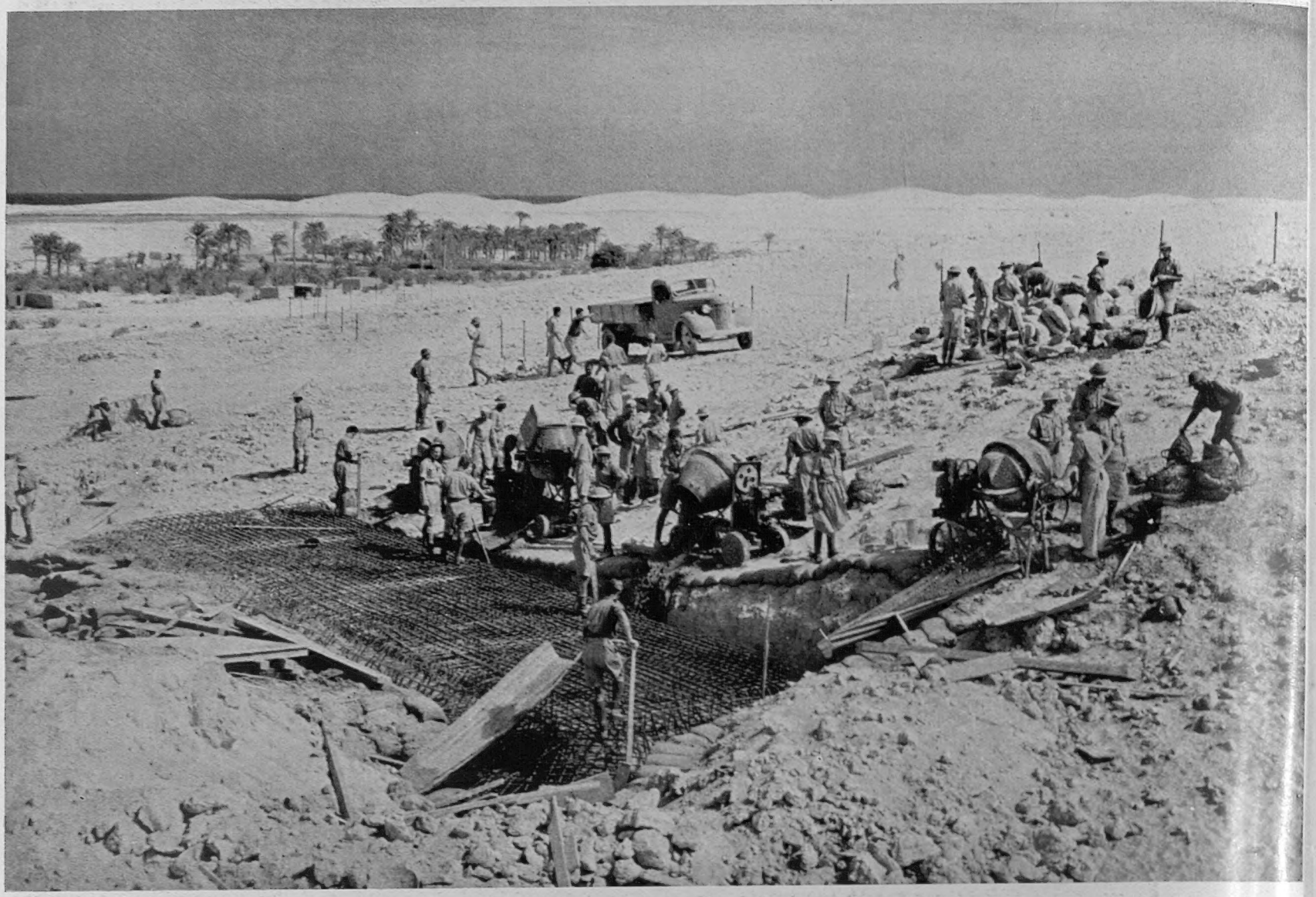
THE British Imperial and Allied victory over the Italian Army of Invasion in the Western Desert of Egypt is here shown in diagrammatic bird's-eye views, specially drawn for THE SPHERE. The large upper panoramic view shows the main Italian positions on the plateaux and "the Beach," which had to be captured to secure the desired victory. Black arrows denote the main lines of attack, and in the background the naval force co-operating so effectively with the land forces is also indicated. *On the left* is a key chart showing the dates and hours at which the action began and developed. The line of forts is here indicated as a diagrammatic group and includes Safafi and the Tammar series of posts. The two views taken together should give the reader a general idea of the way in which the strongly fortified positions of the enemy were outflanked and overpowered.

The first orders were issued to the assembled troops on the night of Saturday, December 7, and after the unobserved advance across the desert (there was no Italian air reconnaissance), contact with the enemy was made at dawn on Monday, December 9. The frontal attack seems to have been slight, the main element of victory being the stealthy creeping through of the forces between the enemy lines of forts, east of Safafi, which was left unattacked, and the entering of the Italian forts by the back doors, conspicuously at Nibeiwa and the Tammar group. Nibeiwa was surprised and the confused opposition overcome by 8 a.m. on December 9. The fall of these outer-line forts allowed the British-Imperial forces to press on towards Sidi Barrani and Maktila, on the coast. Here the most intensive fighting occurred, a Blackshirt division putting up a brisk defence with gun-fire, but the range closed and machine-gun fire began to devastate the Italian ranks. The native troops at Maktila retired in front of heavy shelling by naval units, the heaviest fighting continuing in the area shown in the diagram on the left, between the two big arrows below Sidi Barrani. At the same time, another force had succeeded in driving up to the coast to the west of Sidi Barrani, thus cutting off the retreat of the big Italian forces there concentrated. Some 20,000 prisoners were made, as the result of this enclosing movement. The big Italian position at Safafi, which had been left to a watching party, reacted as it was hoped, to the bad news from the north-east, and soon a general retreat to the west was observed. The whole post was evacuated and the retreating forces were soon heavily attacked from the air and put to a disorderly flight. More prisoners were made, totalling probably some 14,000 in this fort area. During the whole period of the action, the R.A.F. continued to assist the ground forces by beating off the Italian fighters and bombers and by strafing the Italian troops on the ground, whether in the Sidi Barrani area or when the general rout and flight to Libya began. Twenty-six Italian planes were brought down on Sunday alone. An amazing amount of war material was captured both in the forts and out onthe battlefield

THE AUSTRALIANS FOUGHT SIDE BY SIDE WITH THE HOME BRITISH: The victory of Sidi Barrani, as the battle may well be termed at the moment, was an Imperial victory, Empire forces fighting beside the British amid the sandstorms of December 7 to 9, and in the dayswhich followed, when the whole Italian Army was on the retreat

A SMILE ON THE FACE OF THE GENERAL WHO WAITED TOO LONG: Examination of the enemy camps showed the most elaborate defensive devices, which were nearly all outflanked. This picture of General Graziani seems to symbolise the fact that he waited too long before striking or attempting to strike a blow at Northern Egypt

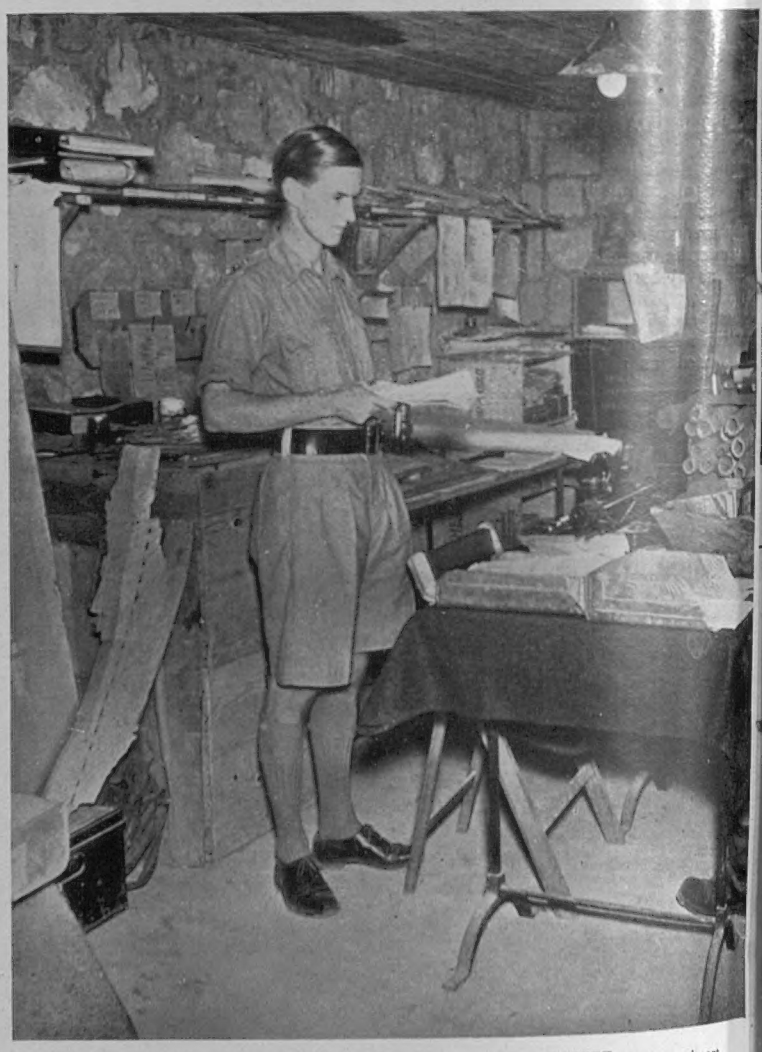
The BRITISH ARMY in the WESTERN DESERT: Now Operating with such Brilliant Success in Libya



BEFORE THE TRIUMPHANT ADVANCE ALONG THE COAST: Men of the Royal Engineers at work on the construction of a reinforced concrete gun emplacement in the Western Desert. Now that such a huge advance has been made against the Italians, and their spearhead cut off, this emplacement may never be needed!

SOLLUM ENTERED ON SEPTEMBER 17—EVACUATED IN THE ITALIAN RETREAT, DECEMBER 15: Almost exactly three months ago, Italian forces advanced into Egypt and occupied the already deserted Sollum, a straggling line of houses. The enemy proceeded to strengthen its fortifications and developed it as a base for his presumed penetration of Northern Egypt. Towards the end of last week, the Italian forces left in flight, endeavouring to reach safety up the slopes of Helfaya Gorge to the South

SIDI BARRANI MAY GIVE ITS NAME TO THE DESERT BATTLE: Sidi Barrani was a collection of buildings grouped along the Mediterranean shore, backed as at Sollum by the escarpment, which here was several miles further to the south. On December 8 and 9 it was full of enemy troops, who also were spread out in advanced fortifications well supplied with artillery and ammunition of various types. It was in front of Sidi Barrani that a really strong opposition was met by our troops



AT WORK IN AN INTELLIGENCE OFFICE IN THE DESERT: In a desert campaign the work of Intelligence is very important: local factors and interests are always taken into account, and the attitude of the natives carefully studied. This picture shows the concrete structure erected to house the Intelligence organisation in Western Egypt; it is complete down to the last detail, including

THE BRITISH ARMY ADAPTS ITSELF TO ITS SURROUNDINGS! With its customary facility for adapting itself to local conditions, the British Army in the Western Desert has taken every advantage to make itself comfortable, and workmanlike. This official photograph shows the Headquarters of a British Battalion in an old Roman tomb found in the Desert. The niches in which coffins once stood are now used as sleeping bunks and have been unofficially dedicated by their occupants to Walt Disney's famous "Seven Dwarfs"!

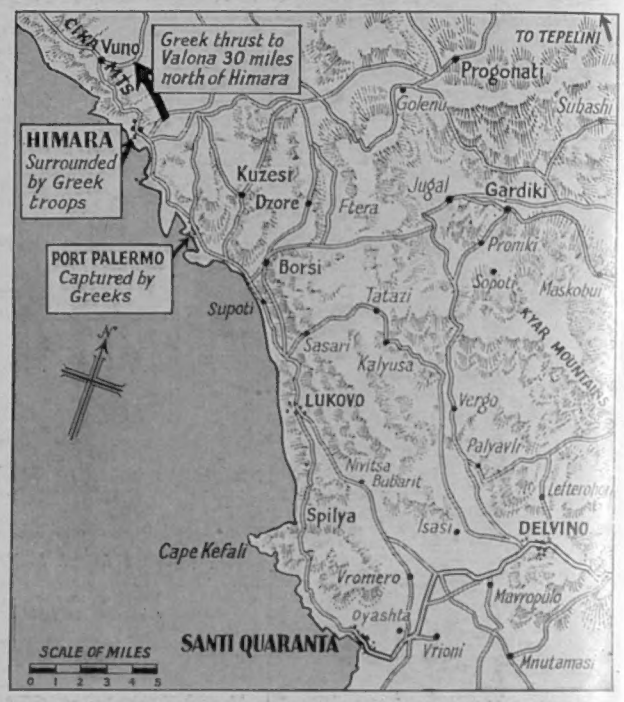
electric light. In the course of her many Colonial campaigns Britain has demonstrated over and over again how well she has mastered the very difficult art of coping successfully with native conditions in the areas in which she has campaigned

A TELEPHONE EXCHANGE UNDERGROUND, HOUSED IN A CONCRETE DUG-OUT: During the past few months of comparative inaction (so far as fighting is concerned) the British forces have been hard at work in preparation for the Italian advance which never materialised. The completeness of the British preparations to hold up the progress of enemy troops is well evidenced by the above picture, which shows the scene in a telephone exchange built deep into the depths of the surrounding plain

THE GREEKS MARCH ON IN ALBANIA

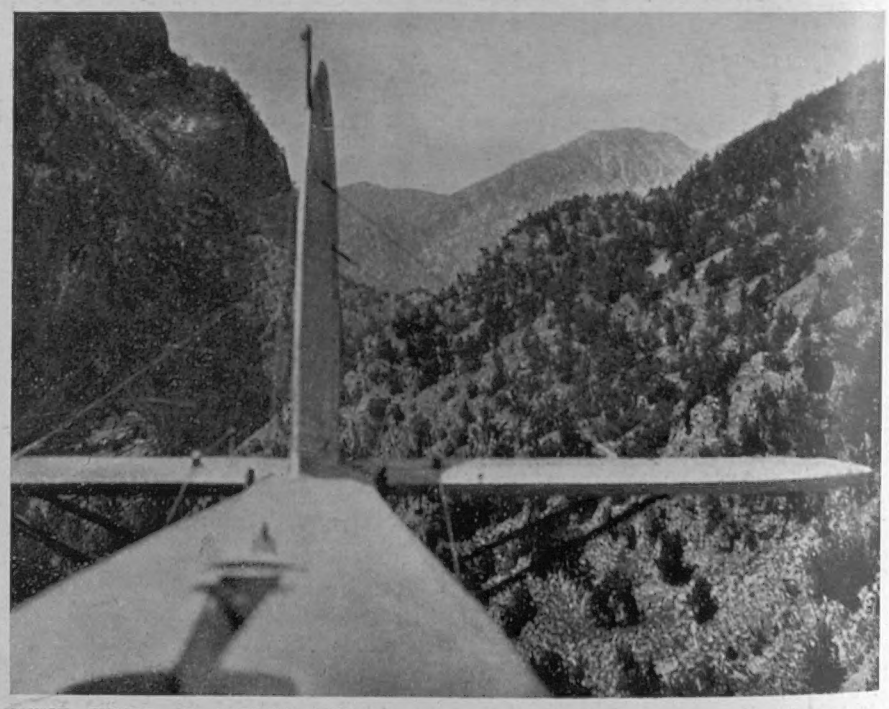
KING GEORGE OF GREECE PRESIDES AT A COUNCIL OF WAR IN ATHENS : This picture has just arrived in London. It shows a meeting of the Greek leaders who are so successfully prosecuting the war in Albania, and their British supporters. From left to right are : Maj.-General M. D. Gambier-Parry, Chief British Liaison Officer in Greece ; General Metaxas, Greek Prime Minister ; King George of Greece ; Air Vice-Marshal J. H. D'Albiac, Air Officer Commanding in Greece ; and General Papagos, Greek Commander-in-Chief

THE THREAT TO TEPELINI, TOWARDS WHICH THE GREEKS ARE NOW ADVANCING : The thrust towards this important city has been steady and relentless ; Greek strategy so far has been of the very best, and despite Italian counter-thrusts the enemy has been unable to stem the advance. Tepelini, at the moment of writing, is closely invested, and its fall appears imminent. When this happens, the Greeks will be in a very strong position indeed, and the river road to Valona will be assured. Already the heights surrounding Tepelini are in Greek hands, whilst other Greek forces are moving up the coast



THE GREEK ADVANCE ALONG THE COAST TOWARDS VALONA : Simultaneously with the advance on Tepelini, the Greeks are pushing the Italians back towards the port of Valona. This has now been rendered almost useless by the R.A.F. In Himara only a few Italians are reported to be holding the little port, the remainder having already evacuated the place

ATHENS FETES BRITISH SAILORS : Enthusiasm in the Greek capital reached fever-heat with the fall of Argyrocastro. Whenever they have appeared in the streets British sailors, airmen and soldiers have been received with acclamation by the populace, flushed with the fruits of victory over the Italians



WHAT FLYING IN ALBANIA MEANS : The R.A.F. have been co-operating with the advancing Greek forces in the very difficult Albanian mountain country. What flying in these regions means is shown by the above picture : for the most part, the mountains are almost inaccessible, high mountain ranges and rocky gorges being predominant. At the present moment, snow is an added difficulty, making flying an even more hazardous undertaking. In addition to the bombing of Valona and Durazzo, the R.A.F. have been wreaking havoc amongst the retreating Italians

The R.A.F. and the COASTAL COMMAND OVER ALBANIA

What Our Flying Forces have been Doing on the Greek Front; and the Machines they have been Fighting with

FIVE spear heads of Greek infantry probe deeper into Albanian territory. Four of the battle fronts are in mountain passes. The fifth is between mountains and the Adriatic.

Ahead of the dashing troops, the passes echo to the bursting of bombs and the rattle of machine guns. The Royal Air Force is at work, helping the tiny Greek Air Force to make the paths easier for the bayonet men, and more than taking the place of heavy artillery.

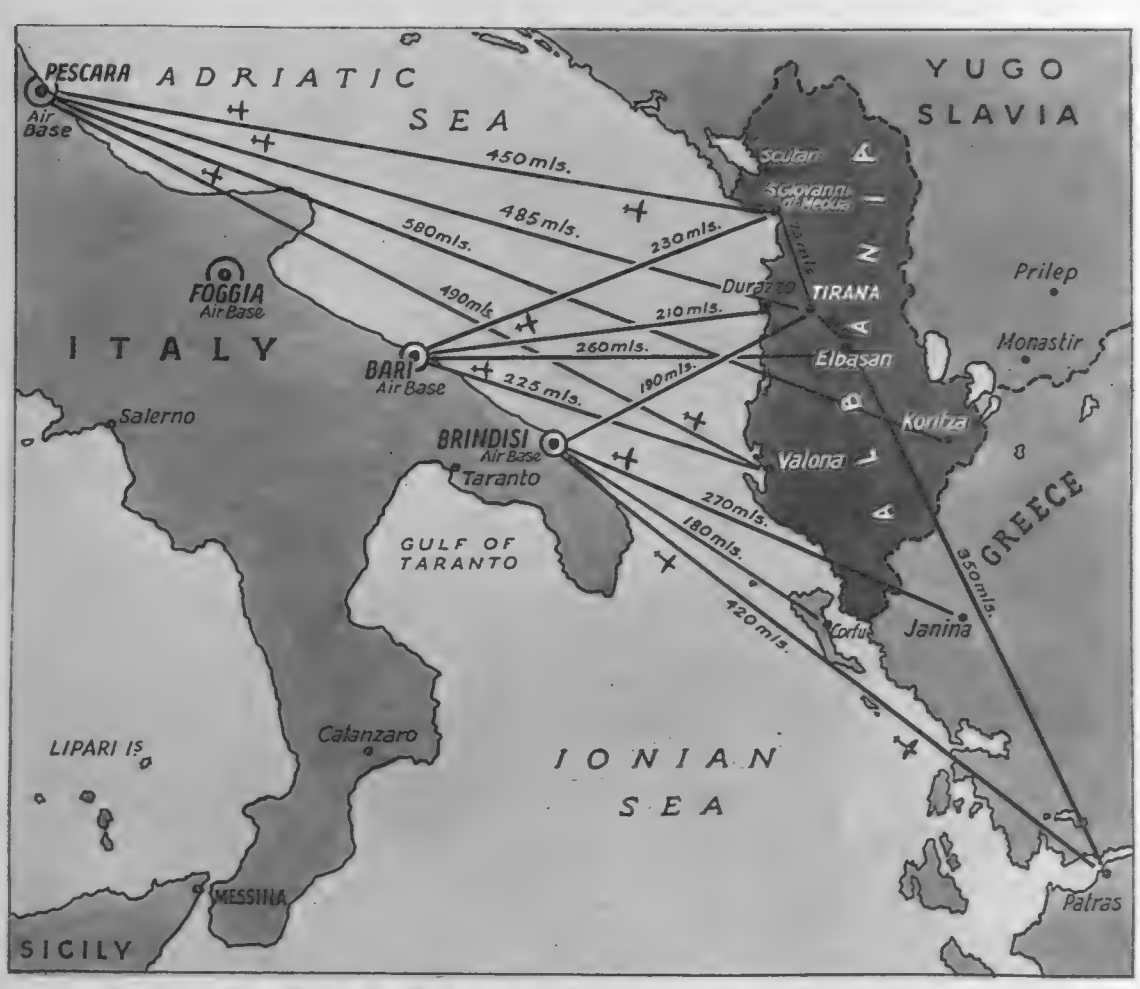
The Greeks began the war with some 300 useful military planes, among them British Gladiators, Battles and Blenheims.

Day by day the Royal Air Force adds to its strength in this theatre of war, as new squadrons of Gladiators and Blenheims come into action. While up the coast, menacing the road to Valona, thunder the giant Sunderland flying boats.

Nor are the Sunderlands afraid to swing east over the land, their pilots confident with four reliable engines and formidable machine-gun defences.

The Greek avdance is giving the R.A.F. invaluable practice in a most difficult form of Army co-operation, and the R.A.F. has simply leaped to it.

Consider the difficulties. They land in a strange country, with strange language and strange maps. They at once fly into battle over the border into another strange country, whose mountainous nature gives the defenders plenty of scope for concealment. That is—the front lines are capable of being shrewdly disposed. The long lines of communication can be concealed only by fog, mist or low cloud.



THE STRATEGICS OF THE WAR IN THE AIR IN ALBANIA: So far as Albania itself is concerned, Tirana is the centre from which the Italian *Regia Aeronautica* began air operations against the Greeks. They have lost the two aerodromes they possessed at Koritza and the one at Argyrocastro. In consequence they have been forced to operate largely from the Italian mainland—from Brindisi, Bari and Pescara, where there are good landing-grounds and maintenance workshops. British aircraft are, of course, operating from Greece—from the mainland and from Crete. If the Greek advance should continue, it is not unlikely that our aeroplanes will be able to operate from such points as Koritza: this point is only fifteen to twenty minutes' flight from Durazzo and Valona. The damage that they could wreak under such circumstances could be very, very considerable; and for once the R.A.F. would be operating against an enemy under favourable conditions!

THE BRITISH COMMANDER IN GREECE: Air Commodore J. H. D'Albiac (now Air Vice-Marshal) being greeted by Mr. G. F. Rolston, British Vice-Consul, when he arrived on Greek soil to take charge of the British forces in that country

So the R.A.F. finds two distinct kinds of war.

Where the Italians make a firm stand, they must be bombed and machine-gunned. Light mountain guns are brought up on the heels of the infantry with incredible speed, but they are not enough.

Liaison between the Greek front lines and the headquarters of the R.A.F. squadrons is fast and smooth. Stubborn points of resistance are marked on the maps overnight. In the morning the Blenheims and Battles dive bomb and shoot, in the double task of smashing the redoubts and of distracting the defenders, to lessen casualties in the foot regiments.

The second task is to harass the retreating Italians from the moment they are forced into the open, and to bomb the ammunition and food lorries in the passes.

Where trains of lorries are found, a determined attack is made on the head of the column. The bombers scream down, trying to disable or overturn vehicles, while also blocking the road with craters.

The same treatment is applied to the tail of the column, which can then neither retreat nor advance.

When this has been achieved, the Italians generally make for the country, while the road in between is methodically bombed.

This, it may be argued, is a game at which two sides can play. Why do not the Italians apply the same treatment?

They do try, on a lesser scale, but their airmen do not show the same willingness to press home the attack. Moreover, the Greeks have shown much greater firmness in standing to their light anti-aircraft guns under dive-bombing.

Salonika and Athens, round which the biggest Greek aerodromes are disposed, are respectively 140 miles and 260 miles from the centre of the Albanian front. They are respectively 300 miles and 540 miles from Naples.

Now the Regia Aeronautica has lost three of its five advance aerodromes in Albania, the two at Koritza, and the one at Argyrocastro.

If the Greek advance is sufficiently consolidated to permit our use of these aerodromes, the Anglo-Greek forces gain immensely, and the plight of the Italians operating the ports of Valona and Durazzo becomes unhappy indeed.

Koritza, which has firmer runways than the Argyrocastra aerodrome, is a mere 15 to 20 minutes' flight from the main Albanian ports.

The Italians have a much higher percentage of aircraft due for replacement on the ground of obsolescence than is generally realised. Yet they have sufficient new stuff to make matters awkward if used with skill and determination. It is, therefore, heartening to note how successful the not-so-new British types have been.

Here are some notes about our types, ignoring the heavy bombers and Fleet Air Arm aircraft that are not based on Greek territory.

BRISTOL BLENHEIM.—Britain's first modern bomber—introduced four years ago. Two 840-horse-power Bristol Mercuries. Crew of three. Top speed 285 miles an hour. Weight, empty, 8,100 lb.; laden, 12,500 lb. Replaced by

LONG-NOSED BLENHEIM.—Mercuries now giving 920 h.p. Speed up to 295 m.p.h. Range increased to 1,900 miles. Carries more than 1,000 lb. additional load.

SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT.—Developed from Empire flying boats. Four Bristol Pegasus engines, each giving 1,010 horse power. Crew of six. Gun turrets fore and aft. Two gun positions amidship. Top speed, 210 m.p.h. Range, 2,880 miles at 178 m.p.h. Weight, empty, 28,290 lb., laden, 45,700 lb.

FAIREY BATTLE.—Introduced four years ago. Light bomber. Crew of three. Rolls Royce Merlin III (1,030 h.p.). Top speed, 257 m.p.h. Range 1,000 miles at 200 m.p.h. Weight, empty, 6,647 lb.; laden, 10,792 lb.

GLOSTER GLADIATOR.—Our last biplane fighter, introduced five years ago. 830 h.p. Bristol Mercury engine. Six machine-guns. Top speed, 250 miles an hour. Range, 420 miles at 210 m.p.h. Service ceiling, 33,000 feet.

THE UP-TO-DATE AEROPLANE BASE AT TIRANA: Since their occupation of Albania, the Italians have completed a most modern aerodrome in that country's capital. This has been their principal base in Albania itself during the present operations. The Greek advance, however, must have caused the Italians considerable perturbation as to its ultimate fate! Before the present campaign the staff at Tirana had laid out a tennis court in one of the hangars. It is not improbable that this has now reverted to its proper function!

WHERE THE MAIN ROADS MEET AT TEPELINI: At the junction of two big rivers, the Drino and Voyosa, high on a rocky shelf, rises the shattered fortress palace of Ali Pasha, the remarkable Albanian despot, who came to such power that Napoleon deigned to make a treaty with him. The spot is an unusual one—the river here widens to the width of the Thames at Westminster, and from its rushing waters rise four small islands. The motor road from Premeti comes in from the east and at this spot joins the road from Agyrocastro. Together they continue to Valona. The ruined palace lies within the walls of the fortress, and the minarets of a mosque rise above the general level of the surrounding buildings

ONCE THE SITE OF ALI PASHA'S ORIENTAL SPLENDOUR: When this now ruined palace was in its prime, it was visited by Byron and other distinguished travellers

THE OLD BRIDGE WHICH SPANNED THE VOYOSA: Travellers in the nineteenth century—they were not numerous—recount the difficulties of travel in this wild land. *Below*—The walls of old Tepelini are crenellated and still impressive although earthquakes have done their best to tear them down. The modern village lies outside these ancient walls

The ROMANCE of OLD TEPELINI

THE tide of battle which has been flowing northward through Albania will, if not immobilised by frost and ever-increasing snowfalls, reach a point of singular interest, at which two modern roadways and two rivers converge. The two rivers broaden as they join into a sheet of water which may almost be termed a lake. Just northward of this point, the combined rivers contract again between somewhat high banks, and here on the map one will discover the name Tepelini, with the indication of a fort or castle, with a small village to one side of it.

One can scarcely doubt that, at a moment not far distant, a newspaper correspondent will arrive at the spot in the wake of the advancing Greeks, and before his astonished eyes will appear the massive ruins of a fort and palace, giving evidence of past military strength and Oriental splendour. For Tepelini was none other than the favourite summer residence of the notorious Albanian despot, Ali Pasha. Born in 1750, Ali Pasha had gained power by gathering round him a band of Albanian brigands, whose services were secured by their share in the general plunder. He was constantly at warfare with neighbouring Pashas, whom he subjugated by his daring, courage, and ruthless cruelty. So dominating a personality was finally acknowledged by the Sultan, who appointed him Pasha of Jannina.

He was enjoying the fruits of this success when he received notice that a young nobleman was paying a visit to Albania. Young Lord Byron, just come of age, and his friend John Cam Hobhouse, whom he had met at Cambridge, were doing the Grand Tour. Byron fell in love with Albania; the wild nature of the country, the robber chiefs, the fierce hillmen, all appealed to him, who hated the regular, orderly life which he found in England. His friend Hobhouse describes the visit to Ali Pasha in his *Journey Through Albania*.

The two young men had arrived at Tepelini, which was the birthplace of the Pasha, and his summer residence.

"The streets of the town, through which we passed, were dirty and ill-built, but everything that had before attracted our attention was presently forgotten, when we entered through a gateway in a tower, and found ourselves in the courtyard of the Vizier's palace.

"The court at Tepelini, which was enclosed on two sides by the palace, and on the other two sides by a high wall, presented us, at our first entrance with a sight something like what we might have, perhaps, beheld some hundred years ago in the castle-yard of a great feudal lord. Soldiers, with their arms piled against the wall near them, were assembled in different parts of the square: some of them pacing slowly backwards and forwards, and others sitting on the ground in groups. Several horses, completely caparisoned, were being led about, whilst others were neighing under the hands of the grooms. In the part farthest from the dwelling, preparations were making for the feast of the night; and several kids and sheep were being dressed by cooks who were themselves half-armed. Everything wore a most martial look, though not exactly in the style of the head-quarters of a Christian general . . .

"On our arrival, we were informed that we were to be lodged in the palace; and accordingly, dismounting, we ascended a flight of wooden steps into a long gallery with two wings, opening into which, as in a large English inn, were the doors of several apartments. Into one of these we were shown, and found ourselves lodged in a chamber fitted up with large silken sofas, and having another room above it for sleeping; a convenience scarcely ever to be met with in Turkey. . . .

The next morning they were given an audience with the Vizier, whom Hobhouse tells us:

". . . Was a short man, about five feet five inches in height, and very fat, though not particularly corpulent. He had a very pleasing face, fair and round, with blue quick eyes, not at all settled into a Turkish gravity. His beard was long and white . . . he was not very magnificently dressed, except that his high turban, composed of many small rolls, seemed of fine gold muslin, and his attaghan, or long dagger, was studded with brilliants."

After receiving such courteous treatment from the former brigand chieftain, Hobhouse was loath to refer to the notorious character of his host, though he had to admit that, to bring about the necessary submission of his turbulent people, he had practised "not only beheading, but impaling and roasting," as occasion required. He had also thrown fifteen beautiful women of Jannina into the lake, after tying them up in sacks!

The Oriental splendour of Tepelini had but a brief existence, for it had fallen into ruin when Edward Lear, the landscape painter, visited it in 1852.

"I walked up, over heaps and lines of ruined fortifications, to the strong and high walls of Tepelini, which still exist, though there are but few buildings within their enclosure. Outside the walls is a short street of miserable bazaars, and beyond—near a green burying ground covered with ordinary tombstones, and some of those pretty dervish tombs—stand a khan, some barracks, and a Bey's house; these are all now existing of the once celebrated Tepelini! . . . ."

Ali Pasha's fall from power was brought about by his ambition to become master of the Morea. He encouraged the Greeks in their revolt against their Turkish rulers, many of the brigand chiefs who conducted the guerrilla warfare having learnt much from his methods. Ali himself was over-confident, relying upon Turkish inaction, but on this occasion, the Porte realised that something must be done. An army besieged Ali in Jannina in 1821, and finally overthrew him, though he had shown his customary courage to such good purpose that the castle held out for several months.

BY THE PLEASANT SHORES OF LAKE OCHRIDA: A fisherman's cottage on the left and the famous Sveti Naum monastery on right

IN THE OLD QUARTER OF ELBASAN, COMMERCIAL CAPITAL OF ALBANIA: Elbasan by reason of its position at the junction of a great number of roads and its access to the sea has always been a busy centre of trade. The Greeks would gain much by its occupation

THROUGH the ELBASAN and LAKE OCHRIDA COUNTRY

A FEW miles south-west of Struga runs the frontier of Albania. Characteristically, this line crosses the road to Elbasan at a point where the industry, the ease, and the comparative wealth of the lakeside towns seem already remote. The road climbs through glowering hills that steepen swiftly to tree-clad mountains.

There is nothing barren about these forests. Huge outspread hands of beech, chestnut and oak tower above the road. Far up the slopes that they climb so dauntlessly, the tree-line suddenly ends as though the hand of man had curbed the forest, and close above this line burn, in scattered rings, the fires of the shepherds who summer there each year to graze their sheep on the hilltops of grass. Great ravines cut the mountainsides, and at the road these are bridged with a row of tree-trunks that seem perilously frail when winter torrents surge below them.

For those bound for Elbasan, Lubitsa is the first official stop; a small, lonely town and military post which derived its only importance from its position of being first with the news of the rest of the world, which reached it often on the same day as Elbasan. From there the road leads down to the bed of the River Skumbi, and is joined there by the road from Dibra, which is the only town of any importance in the north-east of Albania. It would be curious if the ugly, modern concrete bridge, which the Italians built across the river here before their occupation, should see the decisive battle in the present war. Yet it is rumoured that the Italians have decided to abandon Southern Albania, and if this be true, Mirake, the little market town which thus, with its bridge, commands the only southern link with the north and east (and the only other northern east-west road runs through Bureli and the Mati district, birthplace of King Zog and home of his staunchest and best-equipped supporters), may well be the position of the decisive conflict. Elbasan, some fifteen miles further on, is, but for its lack of a port, the natural capital of Albania. Roads radiate from it in all directions—north-west to Tirana, west through Kavaja to Durazzo and Valona, south to Berat, branching on the way to Koritza and eastwards through Miraka to Dibra and Struga. Unexpectedly, in the centre of this wild country, Elbasan appears as a prosperous and busy provincial town.

South of Elbasan lies a region that is perhaps richer than any other in the country. The mountains are less steep, and agriculture more prosperous. Because of this, the whole atmosphere is subtly different from the harsher regions. There is less inferiority complex which makes the better-schooled young men of less prosperous districts seem often harsh and arrogant. Because the land is good, it is worked more easily, and those sons who go for their education to Tirana, Koritza or Scutari, return with more practical ambition. Just north and to the west of Berat, the coastal plain that runs between Durazzo and Valona reaches its widest point. Within this region, about ten miles from the coast and about three from the small town of Fieri, lie the monastery and city of Apoyani. Apoyani was known to archæologists long before Albania came into the light of political activity. It is, like the large but less perfect Butrinto, some miles to the south, a city built by the Greeks, enlarged by the Romans, and wrecked by the same earthquake in about the fifth century A.D. which ruined Durazzo. A single Frenchman worked there in the days of peace for six months of each year, with only a handful of local labourers to help him in his gigantic task of bringing to light the sculptural and architectural beauties of this buried city that had once been a prosperous port. Apoyani is, like the castles of Berat, of Ochrida, of Scutari, of Argyrocastro, but another scar borne by this small country as witness to the invaders who came, conquered, and passed with all living sign of their conquest into forgotteness.

PEASANTS CROSSING LAKE OCHRIDA IN THEIR HIGH-PROWED BOATS

"The road to Struga runs within a mile of the Western shore. From it rise hills thick with scrub-oak and chestnut, while roughly-made paths slant downwards, cutting through seams of rock, to a few isolated buildings which throw vivid reflections of their whiteness into the deep still water. A rich man's house, a monastery, a small convent guarded from the water by a thin seam of poplars, gleam at the water's edge like the platinum claws grasping the sparkling serenity of a sapphire. At the southern corners of the lake, the aggressively new houses of Pogradets face the Arabian Nights palace of Sveti Naum. Sveti Naum has a strangely worldly and prosperous air after the crumbling desolation of many of the monasteries of Southern Albania. It is, in fact, far more than a monastery, playing its part as a rendezvous and business centre for all its near neighbours, as well as a place of pilgrimage for both Yugoslavians and Albanians, to which latter for a few years after the last war, it belonged. Round its white gates grow long sweet grass, and plum trees gay in the summer with their golden and crimson fruits"

SHIPS, AEROPLANES, TANKS IN GROWING NUMBERS

DOWN THE SLIPWAY TO POLICE THE SEVEN SEAS AND TO GUARD THE CONVOYS

After nearly one and a half years of war, fresh additions to the Fleet are now leaving the slipways of all the Naval construction yards each week. Aircraft-carriers, battleships, cruisers and destroyers—laid down some time ago and the construction of which has been accelerated by war needs—are being added to our fighting strength almost every month. To-day, there is very little fuss when naval vessels are launched and sped on their way to the fitting-out berths : here one of Britain's latest cruisers is being towed down-stream after her launch from the slipway seen in the foreground, watched only by the shipyard workers who helped to build her and who will soon be hard at work on another vessel

MORE AIRCRAFT FOR THE R.A.F. FOR RECONNAISSANCE AND SUBMARINE-SPOTTING WORK

This barge contains a load of wings destined for the big Saro London flying-boats of the R.A.F. ; they are going down river from the factory for assembly to the hulls. These aircraft when completed will be taken into service by the Coastal Command, and will help in the work of reconnaissance and submarine spotting in protection of British shipping. The Saro London is a twin-engined open-sea flying-boat, which has a very long range and which is admirably designed for the arduous patrol duties it is called upon to perform in all types of weather

THE ARMY IS GETTING ALL TYPES OF TANK FROM THE FACTORIES AND IS DAILY CARRYING OUT MANŒUVRES WITH THEM

Supplies of all kinds are now coming in an unending flow from the arsenals, shipyards and factories of Britain ; all three Services are finding their requirements met in heartening fashion. Production of the tank is going ahead—and all types are coming forward now. As they are received in the Army, so training in their employment is going ahead. This picture was taken during a mock attack by Australian troops during recent manœuvres

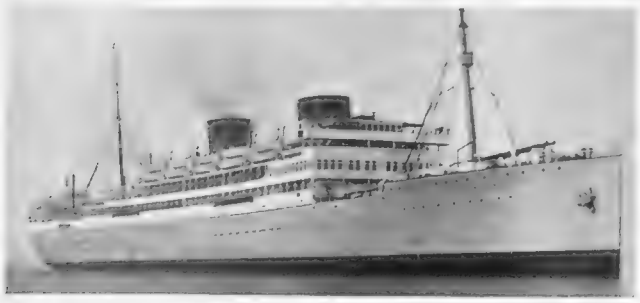
The DOGS of WAR: And Polish Defence Troops in Scotland

TRAINING DOGS FOR WARTIME USES: Floss is a cream and black Alsatian: She is one of three Alsatians being trained for Army work by Mr. Leslie Oliver. Here she is demonstrating how to lay a telephone cable: Floss will carry a mile of cable over bomb-pitted, barbed-wire-entangled ground in two minutes, non-stop—the cable being paid out from a roll carried on her back as seen here. The three Alsatians are stated by their owner to be incorruptible; dinner time is at seven o'clock, and they will not touch even the juiciest morsel at any other time

AN IGLOO-TYPE SHELTER ADOPTED BY THE ARMY: This steel shelter has been provided for the military policeman on duty at a cross-roads in a south-coast town. It seems to bear an amusing resemblance to an Eskimo igloo, or snow hut. The bulldog is, needless to say, the mascot of the military!

FORTIFYING THE COASTLINE OF SCOTLAND AGAINST INVASION—A WORK ON WHICH THE POLISH FORCES ACROSS THE BORDER HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED: This impressive picture was taken during the course of a visit to the Polish Army in Scotland. These men have not been passing the time in idleness—far from it. To make sure of a warm reception for the enemy should he attempt to approach these shores by what might be called "the long route" whole stretches of the Scottish foreshore have been protected in this manner—with anti-tank barriers of concrete, with trenches, and with immensely strong bastions. Apart from these purely defensive works, other Polish forces have been active in the Air Force and at sea

GERMAN COMMERCE RAIDERS IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEANS: WHERE THE RAIDERS HAVE BEEN REPORTED, AND THE BRITISH FORCES WHICH HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO BE OPERATING AGAINST THEM



The British auxiliary cruiser H.M.S. "Carnarvon Castle," which engaged one of the German raiders in the South Atlantic and later put into Montevideo for repairs

IT was at the end of October last that suspicious enemy ship movements began to be reported from the American coasts. On October 29 it was stated that the Hamburg-Amerika Line cargo boat *Helgoland* (2947 tons), which had lain at Barranquilla, Colombia, had slipped out without papers to meet a German warship. The following day the German High Command said that a German warship had sunk three enemy armed merchant ships of 18,400 gross registered tons. On November 7 came the news of the German attack on the British convoy which was so gallantly defended by the *Jervis Bay*. *The City of Larnish* was mentioned at the same time as having been heavily shelled by a German warship of the *Graf Spee* class. It was subsequently proved that the loss of ships from the attacked convoy was quite small.

On November 16 an attempted escape by four German vessels, the *Orinoco*, the *Rhein*, the *Idarwald* and *Phrygia* from Tampico, Mexico, was foiled by British warships. Three of the ships returned to port but *Phrygia* was set on fire by her own crew. The *Orinoco* (9660 tons) was an auxiliary cruiser during the last war. The nature of the vessels which scared the ships is uncertain; they may have been U.S. patrol boats. The *Orinoco* is said to have had an abnormally large amount of food on board.

On the 24th a German surface raider again gave evidence of activity, when the British Port Line steamer *Port Hobart* (9430 tons), reported being shelled 500 miles north-east of Puerto Rico, and her fate was unrecorded. There was a pause in raider news for about a fortnight, to be followed by a more spectacular announcement that the armed merchant-cruiser *Carnarvon Castle* had been in action with a German ship armed with somewhat heavier guns, in South Atlantic waters. It had been a brisk fight, each side scoring hits, with the long, clean-looking raider making off under a smoke-screen. The *Carnarvon Castle* returned to Montevideo for the permitted 72-hour repair work. Rumour was busy that British warships were hunting the raider. On December 8 a Uruguayan cruiser believes she saw the battleship *Warspite* on the trail, and a few hours later it was definitely understood that H.M.S. *Enterprise* (cruiser) was actually searching for and possibly in active pursuit of the raider, already damaged in the fight with the *Carnarvon Castle*.

At the same time the *Idarwald*, foiled in her obvious task of replenishing the raider, was rounded up by the British cruiser *Diomede*. The crew set her on fire and attempts to save her were vigorously made; but she finally sank.

H.M.S. "Enterprise," the 7580-ton British cruiser, which (together with an aircraft-carrier) was reported to be on the trail of the raider engaged previously by the "Carnarvon Castle"

THE FRIGATES OF TO-DAY

The Functions and Features of the Modern Cruiser

THE modern cruiser is the exact counterpart of the frigate of Nelson's day, fulfilling the same functions, although naturally each phase of her duties has been enlarged and complicated by modern methods of warfare. Nelson's constant plea was for more frigates, for their lack very nearly robbed him of his finest victories, and this plea is echoed by every naval Commander-in-Chief to-day. Although there are far more cruisers in proportion to capital ships than there were in Nelson's day, Jellicoe's considered minimum of 70 cruisers for British requirements has not nearly been attained for many years and how much this lack has cost the country, in money and lives, cannot be reckoned until the full story comes to be told after the war, but the figure will be staggering. It is only in numbers that the cruiser fleet is lacking; the ships and men are the finest in the world.

The Italian Navy, of course, claims to have the finest cruisers, and it is a type in which they have taken the keenest interest ever since they have had a fleet. On paper their claim would certainly appear to be supported, but the fact that they fly every time they come into contact with British ships tells its own story and is a lesson to many people who have criticised the British designs on paper details only—such things as guns and speed which can be compared easily enough. There are, however, many factors which do not show on paper but which are essential for a really satisfactory cruiser as the British Navy regards her, and the manner in which our cruisers have been carrying out their innumerable duties shows that the British designers, working on the longest experience with ships which spend more time actually cruising than those of any other fleet, have succeeded excellently.

Materially the cruiser is half-way between the destroyer and the battleship, but in her internal organisation and routine she is entirely "big ship" and has nothing of the go-as-you-please atmosphere, more apparent than real, which makes service in the destroyer so attractive. She carries a captain and commander and a full complement of lieutenants and lieutenant-commanders — torpedo, gunnery, navigating and physical training specialists as well as the non-specialist "salt horse" watchkeepers—an engineer commander and his juniors, a captain and lieutenant of the Royal Marines, a chaplain, naval instructor, various paymaster and medical officers, warrant officers and midshipmen. That is the standard for a medium-sized ship of the *Ajax* type, which has been so much in the public eye recently, but there are naturally variations according to size and the particular service being performed by the ship.

The complement of the *Ajax* is completed by over 500 petty officers and men, divided into divisions just as they are in a battleship, with a detachment of Royal Marines which takes its full part in the working of the ship. In war-time the crew of such a ship, together with most others, would be augmented by spare ratings of various grades, for the strain on the personnel is naturally very much greater than it is in peace and allowance has to be made beforehand for any casualties which may occur.

The position of a captain of a cruiser is, perhaps, among the most responsible of any independent commands offered by the Service, for although the ships are grouped in squadrons they generally do very much more independent work than any other type. This is especially the case in foreign stations where the captain has to be a diplomat as well as a naval officer. Most officers have the opportunity of a commission in command of a cruiser while they are of captain's rank, and it is generally considered to be the critical stage of their career with regard to their chances of flag rank. Distinction and good work in command of a destroyer or submarine will carry an officer as far as captain, but he has to prove himself again before he hoists his flag and the command of a cruiser generally gives him the best opportunity.

With regard to the functions of a modern cruiser it is easier to lay down what she is not expected to do. In the British Navy, however, she is expected above all things to keep the seas for long periods without being forced into port for fuel or repairs, to be ready to work her engines up to full speed at the shortest notice, to be battleworthy at all times, and to keep her men in good health and fit for instant action. These requirements present many problems to the designers which do not appear on paper and which are of comparatively little importance to the navies whose ships are kept in port until they see the

Continued on page 395.

THE NEW BRIDGE AND CONTROL SECTION OF H.M.S. "LIVERPOOL"

Those who were familiar with the busy, three-funnelled cruisers of earlier days will find the appearance of the modern cruiser very strange. There is more of the battleship build about this bridge and control section of H.M.S. *Liverpool* (1937), of 9,400 tons. In her white garb she looks extremely smart and has the lines of a beautiful yacht

THE LONG, SLIM SILHOUETTE OF THE MODERN CRUISER

H.M.S. *Newcastle* shows in this broadside view the long, greyhound lines of the modern cruiser. Two shorter and raked funnels have replaced the three funnels of earlier times. The aeroplane hangars form extensions to the bridge structure and add to the effect of massive weight at this part of the ship. Two light tripod masts are another distinguishing feature of this 1937 type of cruiser

A BRITISH CRUISER ON PATROL WORK: ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF THIS CLASS OF VESSEL IN WAR-TIME

THE IMPRESSIVE BRIDGE STRUCTURE AND HANGARS OF H.M.S. "SOUTHAMPTON"

There is a businesslike look about the *Southampton's* bridge structure. Straight lines and an absence of external gadgets give the impression of a dangerous foe, which she is. The modern two-funnelled cruisers are well armoured as well as well armed with twelve 6-in. guns

(*Continued from previous page*)

opportunity of "tip-and-run" operations. Some cruisers are always required to accompany the battle squadrons, ready to support the smaller ships in beating off the enemy screen and to protect the capital ships from destroyer attack. In the event of a chase their superior speed allows them to go ahead of most capital ships, risking destruction by the enemy's heavy guns but keeping touch to prevent them slipping out of sight by a sudden movement, and doing as much damage as they can with their own small guns.

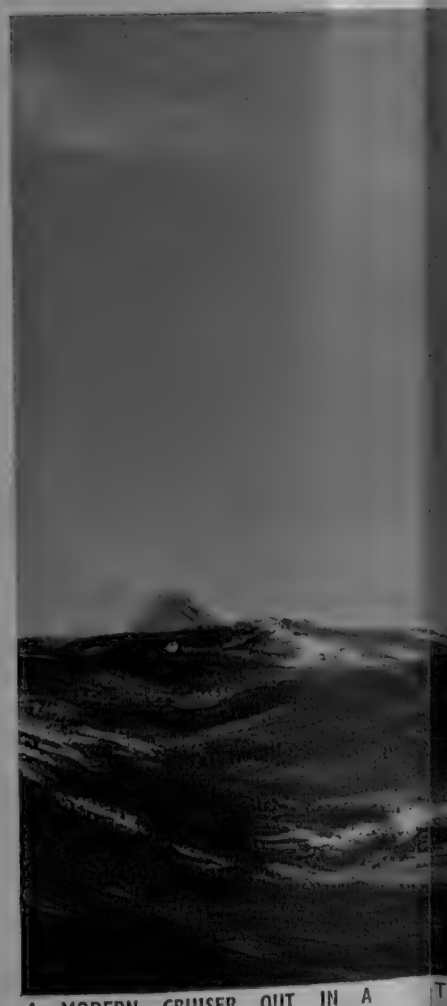
The cruisers also act as repeating ships for the admiral's signals, connecting-links between the heavy squadrons, and are the most convenient ships for administering the *coup-de-grâce* to a stricken enemy.

Acting in squadrons in Narrow Waters, both in the North Sea and the Mediterranean, the cruisers maintain patrols which are beyond the powers of destroyers owing to their limited fuel capacity. They take all precautions against enemy ships breaking out of their ports, although there may not be enough of them to perform that duty satisfactorily at the present time. They have to cover various operations, such as Narvik and Dunkirk, and to carry out sweeps against enemy patrols.

In the more distant seas they search for any secret bases or fuelling stations which the enemy may establish, carry out medium offensive operations which do not demand capital ships, reassure friends and warn potential enemies and, all the time, fulfil the functions of a policeman. This is only an outline of their more orthodox duties; they are always liable to be called upon for a hundred others.

Cruisers are generally divided into 8-in.—the "Washington tin-clads" and the two "Cathedrals"—and 6-in. gun cruisers, which include the new Dido class, which is unofficially understood to mount 5.2-in. guns. This category includes a number of the old "C" and "D" classes, from 4,200 to 4,850 tons, built during the late war for service in the North Sea, although most of these have been converted into anti-aircraft ships mounting 4-in. guns. The "E" class, designed during the war but completed after it, has a displacement of about 7,550 tons, and the Hawkins class is nearly 10,000 and originally carried 7.5-in. guns. The post-war designs consist of the Ajax class, about 7,000 tons, started under the 1929 estimates, the Arethusa class, about 5,250 tons, 1931 estimates, the two Town classes, 9,100-10,000 tons, 1933 estimates, the Dido class, 5,450 tons, 1936 estimates, and the Fiji class, 8,000 tons, 1937 estimates.

The Ajax class possesses ships of medium size which have done particularly good work since the outbreak of war, although full publicity has only been given to the deeds of the *Ajax* herself. That was the first type in which the Royal Navy was able to return to medium size and the 6-in. gun without colossal sacrifice under the international disarmament treaties. They look the part, their clean-cut, businesslike profile being in great contrast to the cluttered decks and bizarre fittings of the Germans, and they



A MODERN CRUISER OUT IN A TOUCH OF DIRTY WEATHER, WHICH SHE IS FULLY ABLE TO MEET

"Acting in squadrons in narrow waters," writes Mr. Bowen, "both in the North Sea and the Mediterranean, the cruisers maintain patrols which are beyond the powers of destroyers owing to their limited fuel capacity." Mr. Montague Dawson here gives an impression of a cruiser on patrol work on a calm morning in the Mediterranean in the neighbourhood of Crete, with the snow-capped mountain range and Mount Ida in the distance

THE FRIGATES of TO-DAY: The Modern Cruiser Described

"sit the water" in the way the sailor always likes to see.

Their hulls are designed for the greatest possible sea-worthiness and to secure high speed as economically as possible. The *Ajax* differs slightly from the others, but their general dimensions are 554 feet 6 inches over all, 55 feet 2 inches beam and a mean draught of 16 feet. Their displacement varies from 6,985 tons in the *Ajax* to 7,270 tons in the *Leander*. To let them maintain their speed in a heavy sea, the bow plating is heavily flared; that is to say, it curves outwards from the waterline to the main deck, but above that the forecastle has perpendicular sides which add greatly to its comfort. The forecastle deck extends for practically half the length of the ship. In addition to the horizontal armour which keeps both air bombs and plunging shells out of the under-water body of the ship, they have a considerable patch of vertical armour amidships, covering their engines and boilers. The guns are in light turrets instead of the open shields which were formerly considered sufficient for cruisers.

Each ship has four screws, driven by Parsons' geared turbines designed for a shaft horse-power of 72,000 and a speed of 32½ knots. This is a point on which the ships have been criticised in comparison with Italian vessels of similar size and armament, which have a speed of 36½ knots which they proudly claim to have been greatly exceeded on trial. No credit is given for exceptional speed, which is no indication of the ship's actual capability in battle trim and which often does infinite harm to her structure. Steam is supplied by only four boilers, whose exhaust can be carried through a single funnel; before the late war the battle-cruiser *Queen Mary*, of 27,000 tons displacement but the same horse-power as these ships, required three huge funnels.

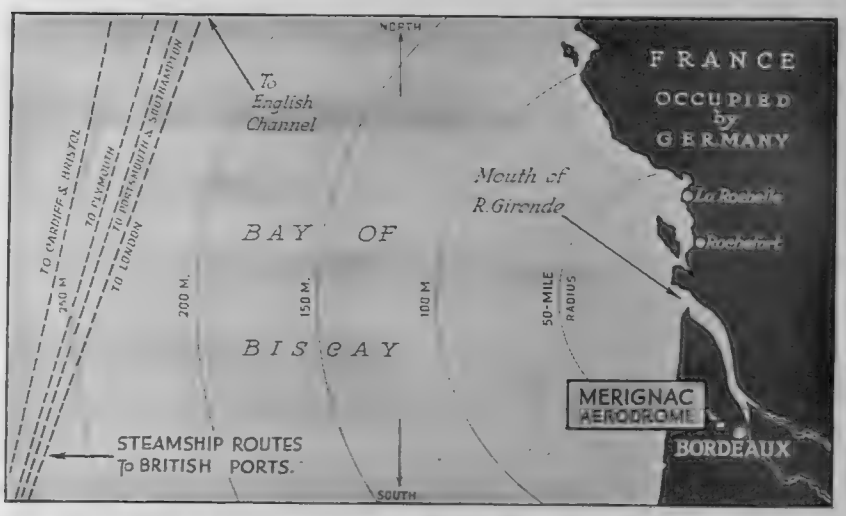
The eight 6-in. guns are arranged in four light turrets, the inner ones firing over the end ones so that half the main armament will bear directly ahead or astern, while, by carefully narrowing the superstructure, all eight guns will bear over a large arc on either broadside. These guns are controlled just as carefully and accurately as those of a battleship, and are fitted with very large gun-ports which often permit them to be used against aircraft.

In later ships the design has been improved and naturally the bigger ships of the Town classes are more striking in their features, but the *Ajax* and her sisters are most satisfactory vessels with which the Navy and the nation can be well pleased.

Frank Bowen

The modern cruiser can ride out fair weather and foul: in this respect she is the most useful type of fighting ship—she can keep the seas when destroyers and battleships would have to seek shelter. In the Mediterranean some very nasty weather may blow up at times, and those who sail its various seas know that it is not all "sunshine on the Blue Ionian Sea." Here Mr. Montague Dawson shows a bit of rough weather boiling up in the waters around Pantelleria

RAIDED BY THE R.A.F.—THE GERMAN AIR BASES IN OCCUPIED FRANCE, FROM WHICH BRITAIN IS ATTACKED NIGHTLY: Some days ago, the R.A.F. adopted new tactics in dealing with the German night bombers. A large force of aircraft made swoops and intensive attacks on enemy-occupied aerodromes from the Plain of Orleans to Holland, a train of explosions and fires marking their tour. Some machines went down to 500 feet and aerodromes were raked with machine-gun fire. Some aerodromes were attacked many times during the night in sharp and sudden raids, while over others our bombers made prolonged circuits as they watched the right moment to release their loads. This map shows the wide range of R.A.F. operations against the German aerodromes.



RAIDED BY THE R.A.F.—THE AERODROME AT MERIGNAC, FROM WHICH HEAVY BOMBERS ATTACK OUR SHIPPING: A little to the west of Bordeaux is an aerodrome from which German heavy bombers are sent out over the Atlantic to attack our shipping en route for West Coast and Channel ports. A few days ago this spot came in for a concentrated attack during the course of which many enemy aircraft, hangars and barracks were destroyed. High explosives and incendiaries were dropped both from high and low levels, shallow dive attacks were made at intervals and some aircraft came down to use their machine guns. When the attack began it was answered by light A.A. fire, but after the raid had lasted for some minutes "it looked as if the gunners just gave up hope"

AIR COMMENTARY—By C. G. GREY (Founder of "The Aeroplane")

THE NIGHT-RAIDERS AGAIN

The Real Way to Approach the Problem of Night Interception. And Some Further Facts About the Supplies of Aircraft from America

SOME newspaper-men have been gibing at Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert for encouraging the populace by telling them that we are getting along nicely with apparatus with which to tackle the night-raiders. One paper came out with a splash heading: "You spoke too soon, Sir Philip." But did he? I think not.

What Sir Philip said was: "We are beginning to take a reasonable toll of those night-birds. We are getting on well with night interception, and I hope to see, during the next few weeks, figures steadily mounting until the proportion of German casualties by night approaches that by day." His critic says: "Well, that was ten weeks ago or more, and your hopes have not been realised yet."

Now I am not an official person—God forbid that I ever should be!—but, as the result of more than thirty years in this air business, in the course of which I have poured much verbal vitriol on to obstructive and obtuse officials, especially technical experts, I do know something of what is going on, and what is not. And I say that Sir Philip Joubert was right in saying what he did.

We *are* beginning to take toll of the night-birds. We *can* fetch them down when we find them. But they are difficult to find in the night and in clouds. And we need more apparatus.

Also, we *are* getting on well with night interception. The problem of the moment, along certain lines, is production and not invention. Nothing could be more foolish than making a few of something new, putting them into action, and giving the game away to the enemy. That is what we did in the last war, when the Competent Authorities, as we hoped they were, tried out all our new mechanisms in such small quantities that they were ineffective, whereas by bottling them up till we had plenty in hand we could have had the combined effect of surprise and mass-attack. We did that with *all* our new aeroplanes. And we did it with the tanks, when we used a dozen or so on the Somme in July 1916, instead of the thousand or two which we ought to have had by then.

The present chiefs of the R.A.F. were among the young pilots who suffered from that idiotic policy, and that perhaps explains why we are getting on well with night interception, and yet the hopes of optimistic newspaper-men, who probably are not old enough to remember the last war, have not been realised yet. Judging by my own limited knowledge of what is being done, I should say that the hopes of the Air Staff, including Sir Philip Joubert, of the technical development of apparatus with which to defeat the night-fighters are being realised quite well. What they want now is more of the apparatus, both in the air and on the ground, and fuller development of detail design to make it more effective.

That, I fancy, is where the Air Ministry's technical experts will need treading upon heavily. I could write quite a sizeable book on the damage which has been done, and the hindrances to progress which have been set up, by these technical experts already in this war. Only recently I heard of one of them who was only just stopped a moment before putting a whole class of our warplanes out of action by issuing a technical order which would have immobilised a vital part of their mechanism. And if anybody in authority doubts this statement I can supply names and facts in about three lines of typewriting.

If there should be any delay in fulfilling expectations (Sir Philip Joubert's or anybody else's) in beating the night-raiders, the fault will be that of the technical experts.

An interesting fact about this business is that it has followed the course of all previous great needs, in that so many people have thought of almost the same thing at the same time. Lots of people invented steam-engines, pneumatic tyres; machine-guns, aeroplanes and other history-making mechanisms all at once. Of these inventions some turned out to be dead-end designs—such as old man

RAIDED BY THE R.A.F.—THE SKODA ARMAMENT FACTORY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, BOMBED AFTER A 1,400-MILE ROUND FLIGHT: Despite its distance from Britain the Skoda works at Pilsen—second largest in Europe—has received its due share of attention during recent R.A.F. raids. The Nazis had hoped that Pilsen would prove beyond the range of effective operation: despite a round trip of 1,400 miles, a heavy attack was successfully carried out. In view of the vast extent of these works—as well shown in the above picture—it is difficult to see how the British bombs could fail to cause very heavy damage!

RAIDED BY THE R.A.F.—THE BALTIC PORT OF STETTIN, ANOTHER LONG-DISTANCE ATTACK: Like Pilsen, to reach the Baltic port of Stettin means a round trip of 1,300 miles, most of it across enemy territory. This picture was taken by one of our bombers at the start of a recent night attack: the figure (1) on the photograph shows the bomb-flash; (2) shows a bomb bursting close to the viaduct which carries the Berliner Strasse over the railway line; and (3) shows the light from incendiary fires. The curious effect of the parallel lines of light is due to the aircraft turning before the camera-shutter had fully closed

Dunlop's original tyre and the original aeroplane of the Wright Brothers—which worked, up to a point, but could not be developed any farther. Of the rest there are probably half a dozen, all of which work equally well.

For instance, the old Hotchkiss gun and the Maxim worked just so far as they went, and could be developed no farther. But who would say which is the best gun of the Vickers, Browning, Bren, Hispano-Suiza, Oerlikon, and perhaps half-a-dozen German types as well?

So when production is in full swing, and if the fingers—or rather, the thumbs—of the experts can be kept out of production and development, we can be sure that the proportion of German casualties by night will approach—and may exceed—that by day.

I agree with the critic when he said that folks take more notice of Sir Philip Joubert than they do of anybody else. The reason is that he does not talk hot air, or politico-military flapdoodle, or flag-wagging patriotism, as do the great majority of the speakers on the B.B.C. He talks plain sense, and so people believe him. Some day a political leader will arise who will be clever enough to understand that the common Anglo-Saxon is not such a fool as the average M.P. thinks he is.

The real question is, ought the populace to be kept in the dark till the job is done, and then be given a pleasant surprise, or should they be told, just to keep their hearts up, or to relieve their sorrows, that there is something good coming along? To put it in nursery terms—in case any official people read these notes—ought the Government, and all that it implies, to say, "Father Christmas will bring you some nice presents," or ought it to say, "Open your mouth and shut your eyes, and see what someone 'll send you"? The semi-intelligent proletariat of to-day does not like shutting its eyes and having some incompetent official putting a chunk of coal into its mouth in genuine mistake for a chocolate.

I say that, just to relieve the gloom of being bombed in the black-out, the Air Ministry was quite right in letting Sir Philip encourage the people by telling them a little of what is coming along. And, because the German High Command know that our High Command does not talk hot air, Sir Philip's words will keep them guessing a whole lot.

Talking of hot air, there have been several paragraphs in the papers lately quoting American (U.S.A.) aviators as saying that they have been ferrying vast numbers of U.S. airplanes by air to this country. They contradict one another delightfully. One says that every time he reached this side of the Atlantic he was attacked by German long-range fighter-scouts on the high seas. One said, I think, that he had been shot down in Northern Ireland. Another had, apparently, flown about a dozen machines over, and had never seen another aeroplane on the journey.

That sort of talk reminds me too much of the stories in 1914 of the Russian troops who landed in Scotland, in that boiling hot September, and travelled through England in blacked-out railway coaches, and were recognised as Russians by the snow on their boots. We who were in touch with authority spread the story for all we were worth, to fox the German spies. And it worked quite well, because the Navy landed thousands of undrilled and almost unarmed R.N.V.R. recruits, from the Crystal Palace, at Ostende, clothed in blue, and therefore not British soldiers. So the German spies in Belgium thought that they were Russians, the German Army advanced more cautiously, and took days longer to reach Antwerp and weeks longer to reach the coast than it should have done, and the British Army had time to dig in on the line from Nieuport to Ypres and Arras.

SIX HUNDRED NAZI RAIDERS DESTROYED BY ONE FIGHTER COMMAND STATION: A Messerschmitt 109 shot down by two Spitfire pilots was the 600th enemy aircraft destroyed by Squadrons operating from a single Fighter Command Station. This exploit won for them the prize previously subscribed for by the various squadrons and ground staffs for the pilot who enabled the Station to claim a total of 600. One of them is twenty-two-year-old Flight Lieut. J. C. Mungo-Park, D.F.C. (on left), and the other is twenty-six-year-old Pilot-Officer Stephens, D.F.C. and Bar. The latter has 19½ enemy aircraft to his credit, and he recently shot down five machines in one day. He was employed on a London evening newspaper before the war

But this time the Germans in neutral America know exactly to a nut and bolt how, and how many, U.S. airplanes are being sent to us. The U.S. Government publishes month by month the numbers of airplanes and motors delivered — and pretty disappointing they are, after all the hot air about 50,000 U.S. airplanes a year which our papers have published.

Why cannot the Ministry of Aircraft Production—this is not the affair of the Air Ministry—tell us how many airplanes the States *have* sent to us, and what they are, and whether they are fit for war or only for training. Cocking-up the hopes of the populace with sheer bunk about American airplanes is a heap worse than telling us that we hope to see the proportion of German casualties by night approach that by day. Come on, M.A.P.! Let us have the facts! There are those who say that the M.A.P. has no Press and Publicity Section, or Directorate of Public Relations, but only a department which allows information to leak out judiciously.

I have not seen any such official leakage, judicious or injudicious, but a lot of things are happening in M.A.P. which will blow some of its departments wide open if they are not put right soon—such, for example, as paying inefficient imported American aviators £37 (thirty-seven pounds) a week as ferry pilots to do work which British pilots do, and are glad to have the honour of doing, for £10 to £15 a week, according to variations of flying pay. And some of our lowly-paid pilots have to teach these plutocratic Americans not only how to navigate, but even how to fly properly.

In the meantime, such American airplanes as we are getting mostly come by ship, in spite of submarines, commerce raiders and bombers. Most people in our aircraft industry think that the shipping-space could be better used if it were packed with raw material, such as aluminium in sheets and bar and strip, steel forgings, ingots, bars and sheet, and suchlike things, to help the output of our own factories, while the U.S. aircraft industry is learning how to build and arm warplanes.

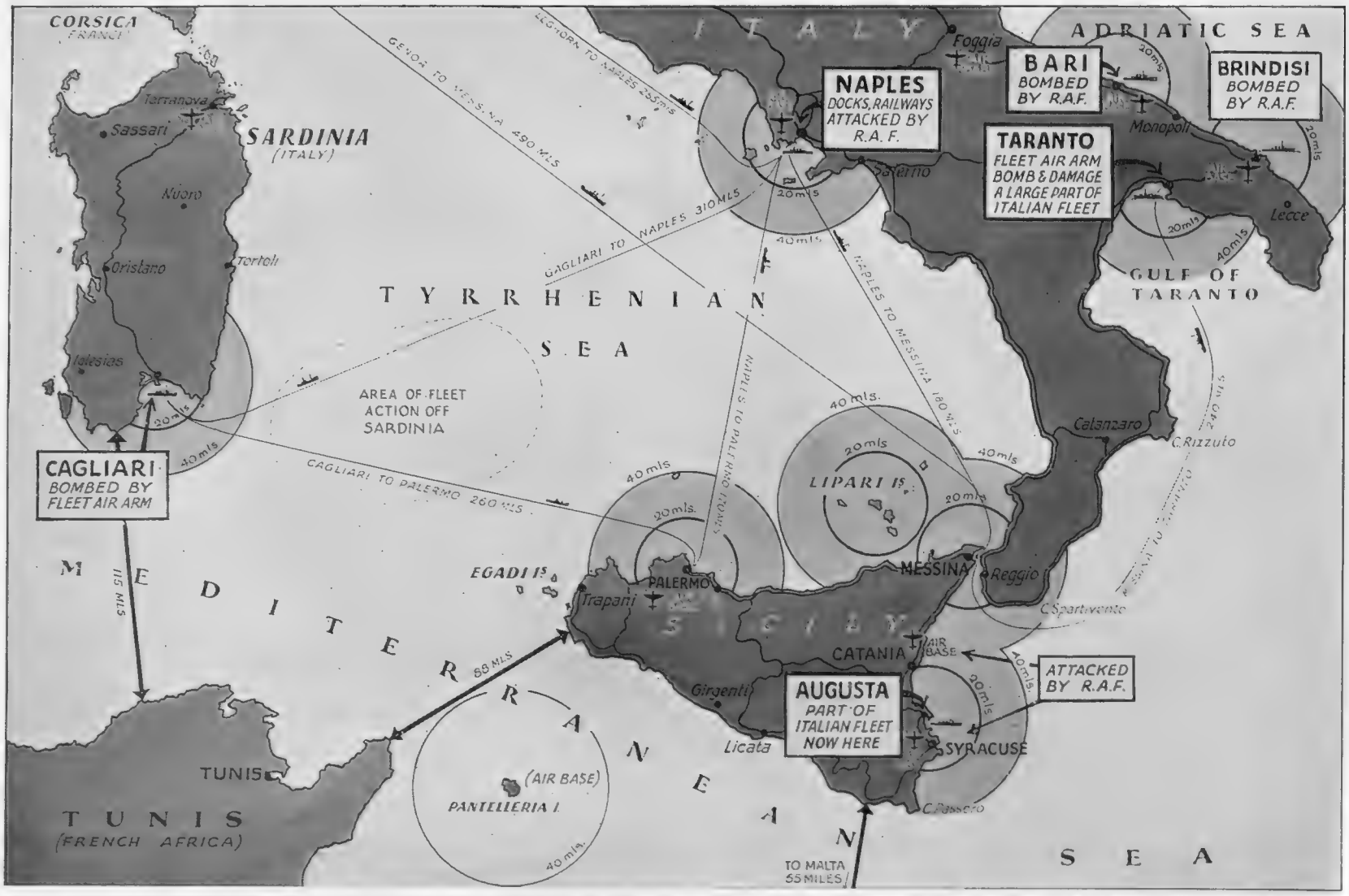
Incidentally, what happens to all those ships when they have unloaded here? The Competent Authority is always telling us that we *must* keep up our export trade to pay for the war. What *do* we export to the U.S.A.? So far as I can gather from the papers all that we export to America are movie stars and society dames with toothsome smiles, Members of Parliament and other chatterers of propaganda, and Staff Officers wreathed in gold lace to teach the U.S. fighting forces how to prepare themselves for war. Cargoes of ivory, apes, and peacocks, so to speak, for the Solomon of the West, Mr. Roosevelt.

Talking of shipping reminds me that people are still puzzling about those stripes painted across the decks of Italian warships. It will be remembered that they were prominent in the photographs taken by the R.A.F. after Taranto. This is my explanation. When the Italian Fleet won its first boat-race against the British Fleet it was not out at sea to fight but to lure the British Navy near the coast of Italy, where it was to be bombed by the Regia Aeronautica. When the Italian aviators saw the smoke on the horizon they leapt skywards, shouting "*Avanti Aeronautica!*" or whatever they do shout, and gleefully bombed the ships. And when they got home they were heavily strafed for bombing their own Fleet.

The Italian Navy evidently took such a low view of the intelligence of the Italian aviators that they painted stripes on their lovely white decks to stop the bombers from being silly again.

CANADIAN PILOTS AT THEIR STATION IN ENGLAND: The pilots are standing by awaiting a "duty" call which may come at any moment. We would call our readers' attention to the good example being set by the pilot in the foreground!

A WARTIME INTERLUDE IN A R.A.F. HANGAR—A SCENE (WHICH REQUIRES LITTLE COMMENT) SHOWING ACTIVITY IN A CAMP IN SOUTHERN BRITAIN

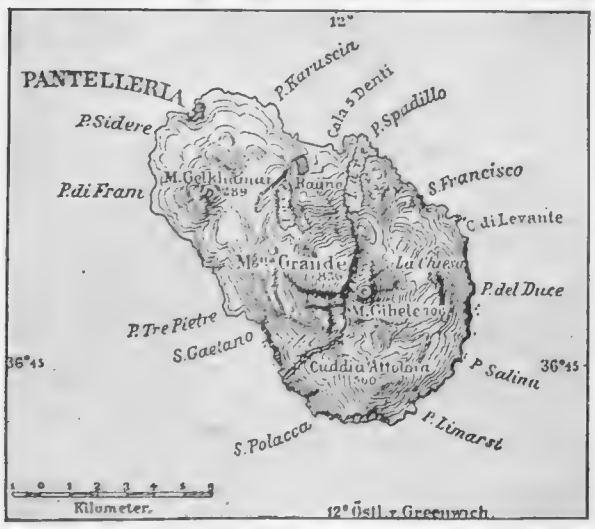


HOW ITALY HAS COVERED HERSELF AGAINST POSSIBLE ATTACK FROM THE ROYAL NAVY: THE CLUSTER OF NAVAL AND AIR BASES AROUND THE HEEL OF ITALY, IN SICILY AND SARDINIA AND ON THE "MYSTERY ISLE" OF PANTELLERIA

STRATEGICS IN THE CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN

IT is a well-established fact that a fleet at sea is badly hampered when close to fortified land bases. In this respect the southern portion of Italy is—apparently—very strong: numerous bases on shore have given shelter to the powerful Italian Fleet, and—so long as they kept behind their land fortifications—they were safe. Until Taranto! From Bari and Brindisi, on the east coast of Italy, past Sicily and Pantelleria, to Caglieri and Terranova, in Sardinia, the Italians have built a number of naval bases and aerodromes—so that a hostile fleet operating in these waters must necessarily be circumspect. With the aid of aircraft, however, the position is not so impregnable in fact as it might appear on paper, for the new torpedo-dropping technique of the Fleet Air Arm has demonstrated that capital ships at anchor in port are not necessarily safe: nor are the enemy's ships—dodging from point to point under cover of the land guns and after a careful inspection for hostile vessels by aircraft operating at short distances from their bases—immune from attack by aeroplanes launched from the decks of an aircraft-carrier

THE HARBOUR AT CAGLIARI, CAPITAL OF SARDINIA: It is to this spot that the remnants of the Italian Fleet retired at speed after their rough handling by the Royal Navy and the Fleet Air Arm in the Mediterranean recently



THE MYSTERY ISLAND OF PANTELLERIA: Midway between Sicily and Africa, very little is known of this mysterious spot

On left—
For many years now Pantelleria has been a mystery spot in the Mediterranean. Less than eight miles long, it is a rocky spot with a central peak rising to 2,500 ft. Pantelleria, in its north-west corner, has been heavily fortified—so it is stated—and the whole island is reputed to be an aeroplane base of great strength, guarding the communications between Italy and North Africa. So far in this war there has been little sign of activity on the island, however

HOW THE NEWS OF THE GREEK WAR REACHES THE OUTSIDE WORLD

Albania is still a primitive region, with comparatively primitive communications: the fighting going on there has been taking place in a jumble of mountainous country. There are, however, four principal channels by which news reaches the outside world: the first is from the Eye-witnesses and correspondents on the Albano-Greek border, whose reports are then transmitted to Athens: the official Army reports come through by this means. The second route is through Yugoslavia, into which refugees are flocking from the area of conflict; these refugees include numbers of Italian soldiers anxious to escape capture by the Greeks. The third route is via R.A.F. bombing planes, which bring back their strictly accurate reports to the air bases in Greece. The fourth route—and the most tardy (selecting only what the enemy think fit)—is by way of the Rome Radio, which receives its reports from its own headquarters in Tirana and Durazzo

THE ROLE OF THE AIRCRAFT-CARRIER IN WAR

A Special Section Describing the Functions of these Huge Naval Vessels

AFTER a bad start, aircraft-carriers have shown in this war that they can be of immense value to a fleet at sea, and in such actions as the attack on Taranto their presence may be decisive.

Before the war the vulnerability of a carrier was fully realised, and all the pessimists seemed justified when the *Courageous* (22,500 tons) was sunk by a German submarine on September 18, 1939. Its loss was followed by that of the *Glorious* (22,500 tons) early in June, after it had done fine work in the Norwegian campaign.

Those disasters confirmed the vulnerability of the carrier in narrow waters. In the Mediterranean the exploits of the new carrier, *Illustrious* (23,000 tons), the *Ark Royal* (22,000 tons), and the *Eagle* (22,600 tons) have shown the other side of the picture. The hitting power of the aeroplanes from a carrier is enormous, and they were used to devastating effect against the Italian Navy.

An aircraft-carrier can fulfil five functions—(i) flying off fighters to defend a fleet against air attack; (ii) flying off bombers to strike at an enemy fleet which may be out of range of the ship's guns; (iii) flying off reconnaissance aeroplanes to seek out and photograph enemy dispositions; (iv) flying off aircraft to protect convoys from sea or air attacks; (v) as a transport to carry aeroplanes from one port to another.

Thus the aircraft-carrier is an offensive and a defensive weapon through the medium of its aircraft. Unfortunately at the same time it is very vulnerable to air or sea attack. Its great flight-deck cannot be armoured because the weight added so far above the metacentric height would make it even more top-heavy. The carrier cannot have the low, lean lines of the battleship, so that it stands up a prominent mark among a fleet. Furthermore, to launch its aeroplanes it must steam dead into wind, whatever the course of the main fleet to which it is attached.

For its chief defence the aircraft-carrier must rely on its own fighters to repel attacking bombers and spot lurking submarines. An aircraft-carrier is also always accompanied by destroyers detailed to defend it.

Drawing by Roland Davies

HOW THE AIRCRAFT-CARRIER OPERATES AT SEA: AND HOW IT IS PROTECTED BY THE OTHER VESSELS OF THE FLEET

At the outset of the war the Aircraft-Carrier was regarded as a very vulnerable vessel, owing to the loss of *Courageous* and *Glorious*. And there is little doubt that the Carrier *is* vulnerable in narrow waters. Since Taranto, however, it has been realised that—properly escorted and defended—these huge vessels can add enormously to the striking power of a fleet at sea. It has speed—greater than that of many types employed by the Royal Navy—but it is big and it cannot be too heavily armoured against attack from above. With a big concentration of naval vessels, however, arranged in similar fashion to that shown by our artist above, the Aircraft-Carrier can function to the full extent of its powers. Destroyers can protect it (and the other vessels) against submarine attack; and the concentrated fire-power of the whole fleet—to say nothing of its own fighter aircraft—can beat off any attack from the air. The action at Taranto, and later the fight off Sardinia, have triumphantly vindicated the Aircraft-Carrier; and hopes have once more been concentrated on this powerful adjunct to the Navy

The number of aeroplanes carried varies from the seventy-two of the *Ark Royal* to the fifteen of the *Hermes* (10,800 tons). They include single-seat fighters, dive-bombers, torpedo-bombers and reconnaissance aeroplanes. Though the types vary much in detail, all have one thing in common—they must be designed to go down the lifts to the hangars below decks and they must be able to alight reasonably slowly on a pitching deck. They have to be equipped with deck landing-hooks to catch in wires and brake the landing-run, and they must have internal flotation gear.

For those reasons most aeroplanes of the Fleet Air Arm have rather less performance than equivalent land types, and until recently all of them were biplanes—the wings of which are easier to fold. During the past two years the Blackburn Skua two-seat fighter dive-bomber monoplane has been adopted, followed more recently by the Fairey Fulmar monoplane. The gap in performance between land and sea types has been narrowed.

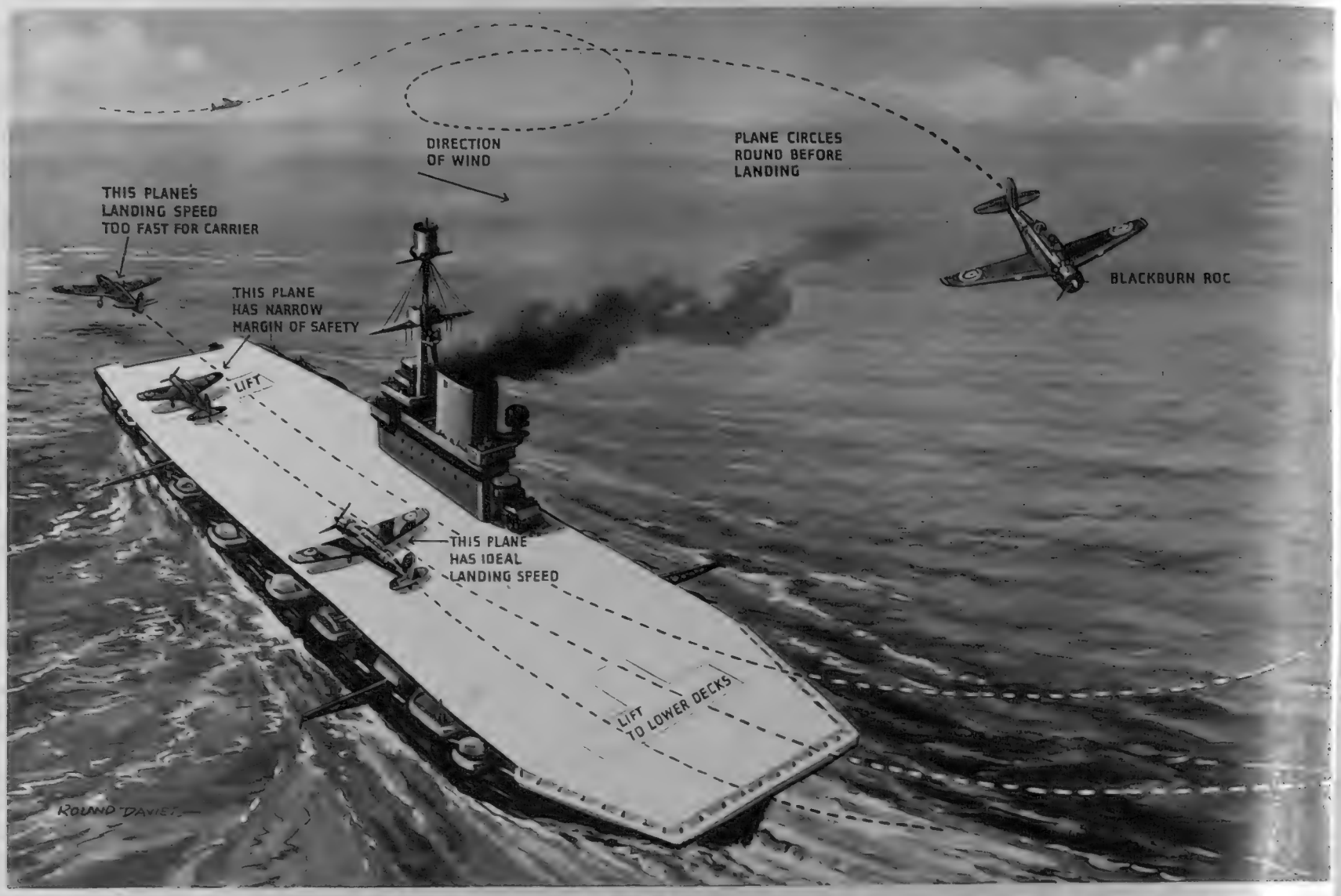
Take-off is not such a problem as landing for Fleet Air Arm machines. For one thing, the speed of the carrier into wind provides a 40 or 50 m.p.h. wind over the deck so that if a machine normally becomes air-borne at 70 m.p.h. it need accelerate to only 30 m.p.h. over the deck before it is flying. Alighting calls for nicety of judgment, though once on deck with arrester-hook engaged there is little to worry about.

The carrier adds air power to sea power in a complementary sense, so that together in force the two are irresistible. The Italians are finding that now; the Germans may experience it later.

AEROPLANES OF THE FLEET AIR ARM EMBARKED ON AIRCRAFT-CARRIERS.

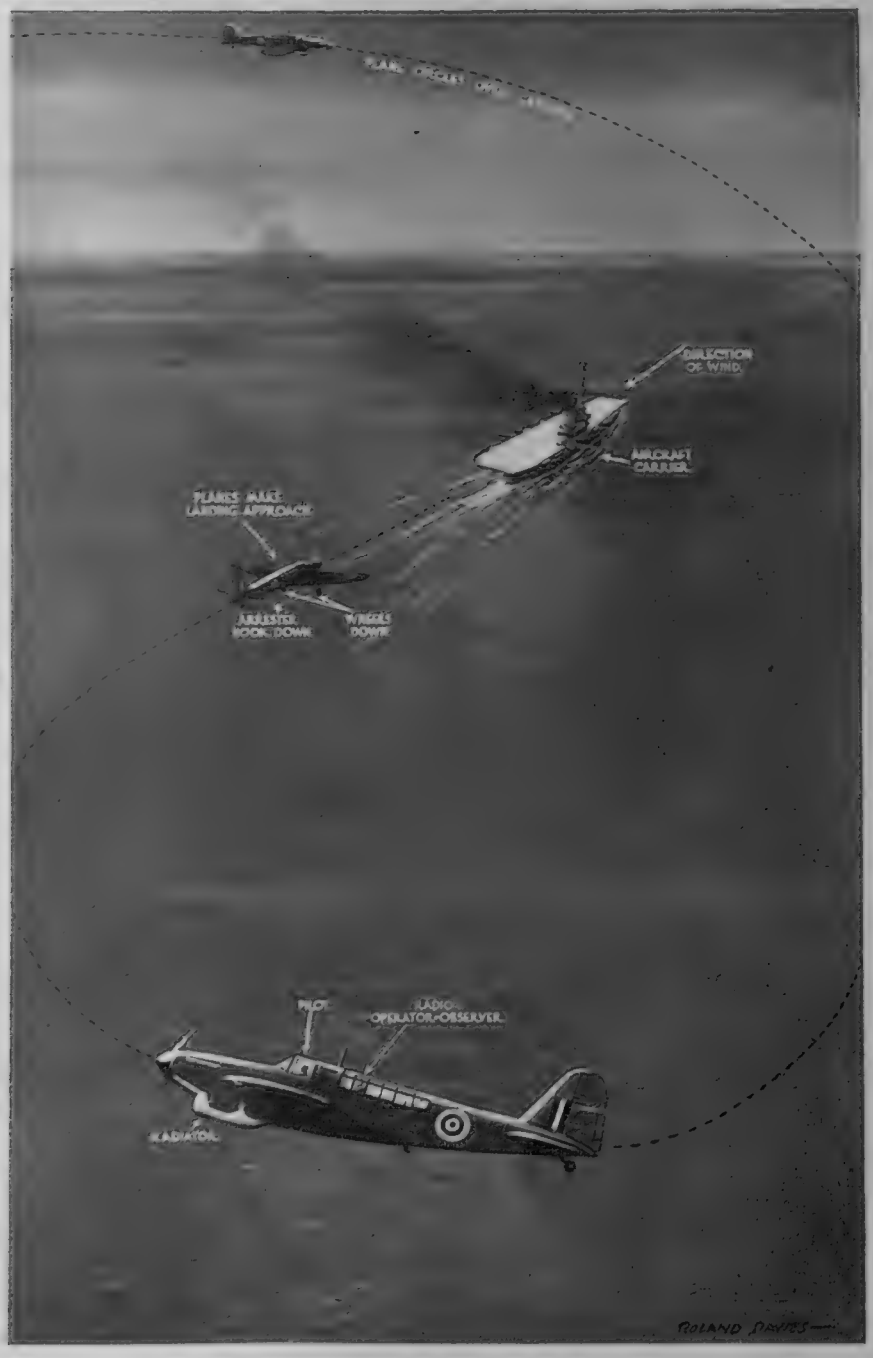
1. Gloster Sea Gladiator single-seat fighter
2. Fairey Fulmar two-seat fighter
3. Blackburn Skua two-seat fighter dive-bomber
4. Fairey Swordfish three-seat torpedo-spotter-reconnaissance biplane
5. Fairey Albacore three-seat torpedo-spotter-reconnaissance dive-bomber
6. Supermarine Walrus spotter-reconnaissance amphibian flying-boat

The Blackburn Roc is not embarked at present



THE PROBLEM OF LANDING ON THE DECK OF AN AIRCRAFT-CARRIER
(*Drawing by Roland Davies.*)

In discussing the question of aircraft-carriers, and the aircraft that operate from their decks at sea, the factor of speed is very important. Fast fighters, for instance, cannot be sent up in shoals for defensive purposes at night because their landing speed is such that a great number of them would crash on landing under war conditions: so it is with the short 900-feet deck of an aircraft-carrier. Special types of planes can alone be used if they are to get home safely with a reasonable margin of safety. Returning planes have to circle round awaiting their turn to come down into wind. A plane with too big a landing speed would overshoot the area of the deck, in spite of various checking devices; a slightly slower type would alight with a narrow margin of safety. The ideal type would make a landing without undue fuss in the position shown



On left—**RETURNING HOME AFTER A FLIGHT:** Here a Fairey Fulmar fighter is seen returning to the aircraft-carrier at sea. This is the latest type of fighter aircraft employed by the Fleet Air Arm: it is fitted with a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine of 1145 h.p., and has eight guns in the wings, a deck arrester hook and catapult hooks. The picture, incidentally, shows the method of approach for a landing on the deck

Above—**COMING IN TO LAND ON THE DECK:** Here a biplane is approaching the carrier to land. The whole art of this operation is radically different from that at a land aerodrome

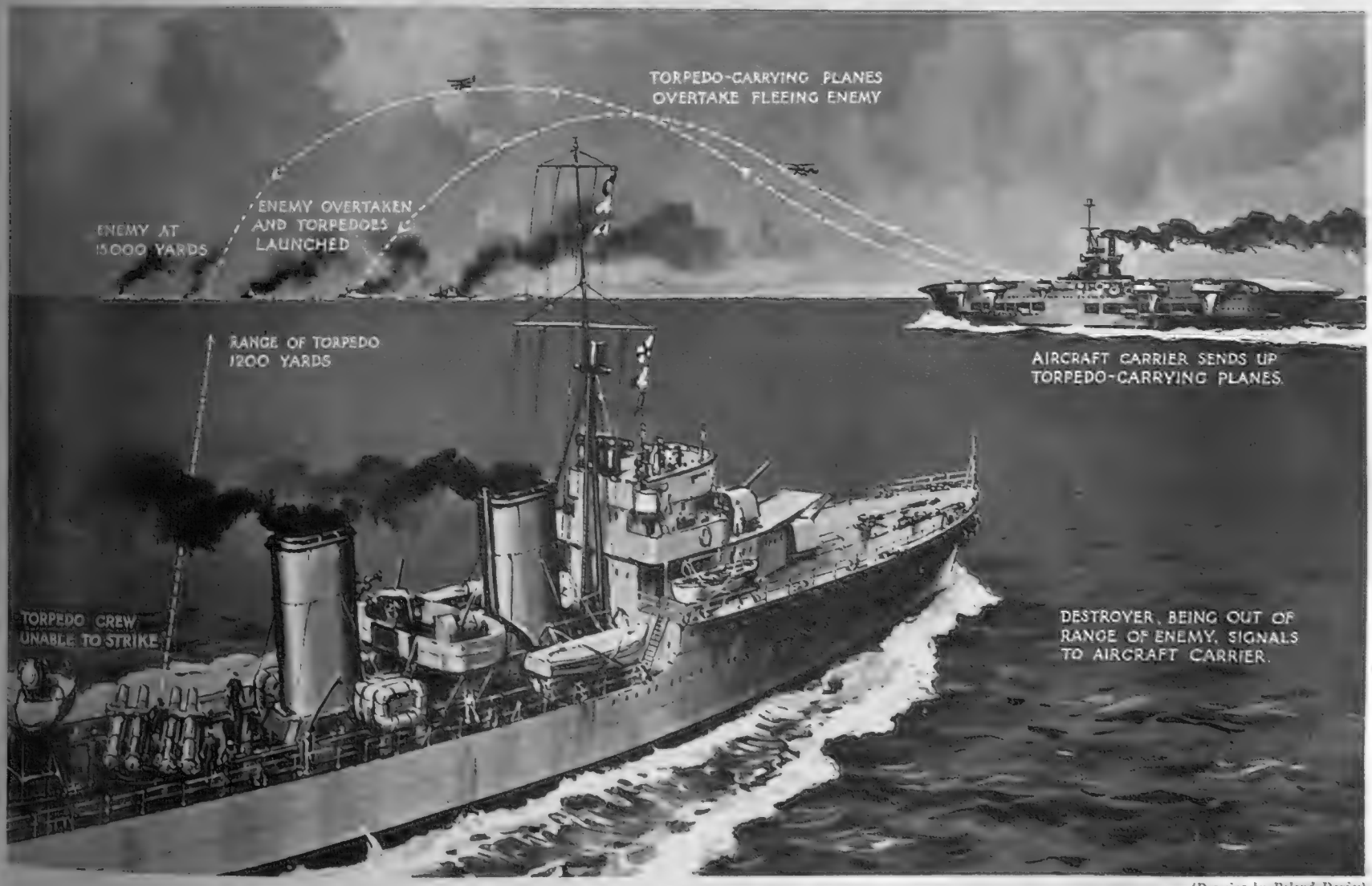
THE ROLE OF THE AIRCRAFT-CARRIER

(continued)

On right—

The types of aircraft employed for duty on aircraft-carriers differ radically from those which operate from land aerodromes. They must have folding wings, low landing speed and otherwise be adapted to fulfil the special functions necessary for flying over the sea as opposed to the land. The most difficult of the problems with which the Fleet Air Arm have to contend is that of landing: not only is the landing space restricted, but there is also the movement of the ship itself—in a heavy, or even moderate, sea this can be considerable. To assist the pilot there is a landing officer always stationed on the deck of an aircraft-carrier. As the aircraft approaches, this officer signals to the pilot whether his approach is being correctly made and whether other conditions are also propitious: if they are not, the aircraft is instructed to carry out another circuit before attempting to land. In bad weather conditions, and with a number of aircraft circling round the carrier awaiting their turn, the problem of landing might be considerable.

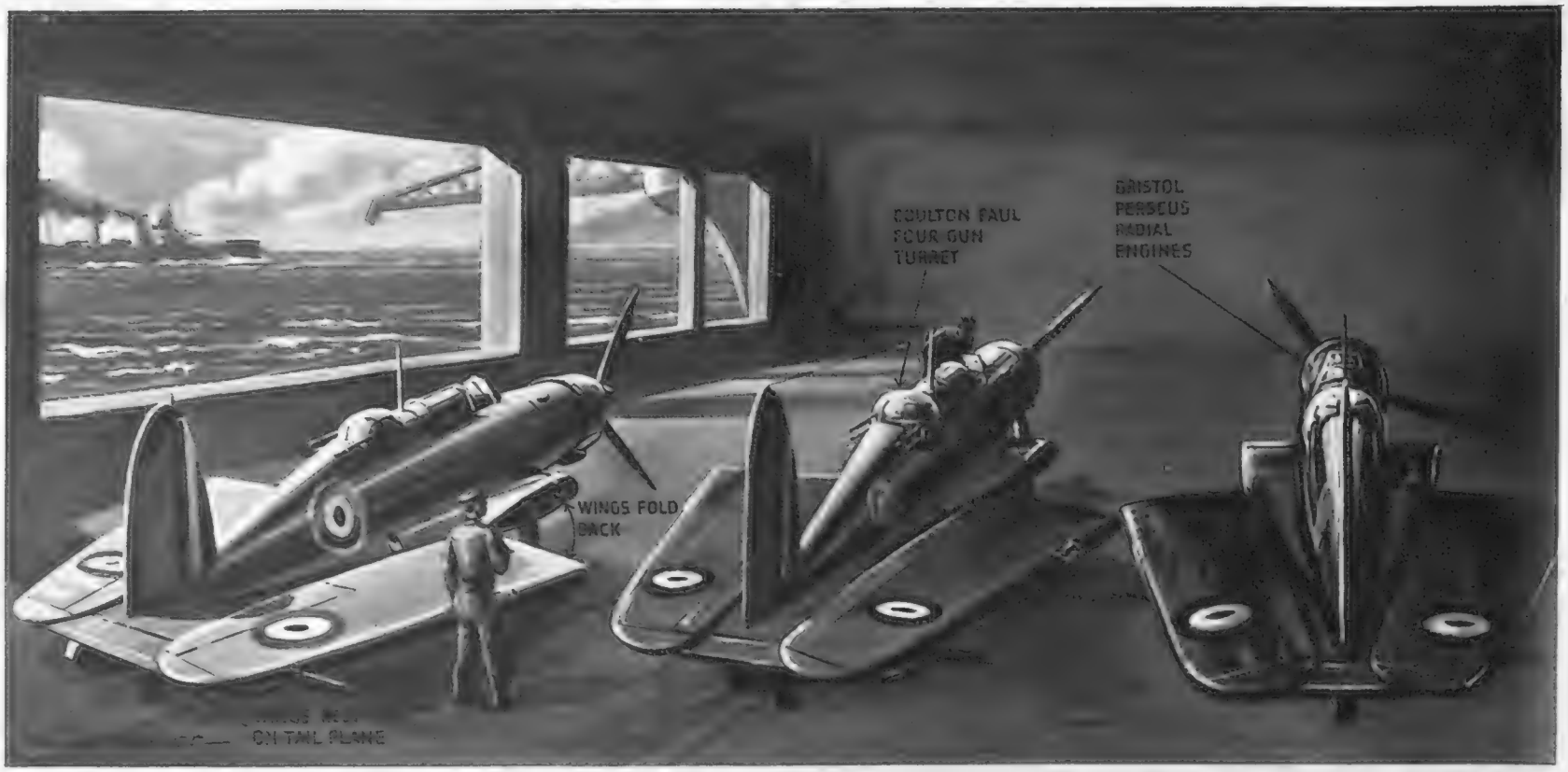
AT SEA IN THE MEDITERRANEAN: AN AIRCRAFT OF THE FLEET AIR ARM TAKES OFF FROM THE DECK OF THE CARRIER FOR A SEA PATROL. OTHER AIRCRAFT ARE LINED UP ON THE DECK, READY TO FOLLOW



(Drawing by Roland Davies)

THE GREAT ADVANTAGE POSSESSED BY AN AIRCRAFT-CARRIER WHEN OPERATING AT A DISTANCE FROM THE ENEMY

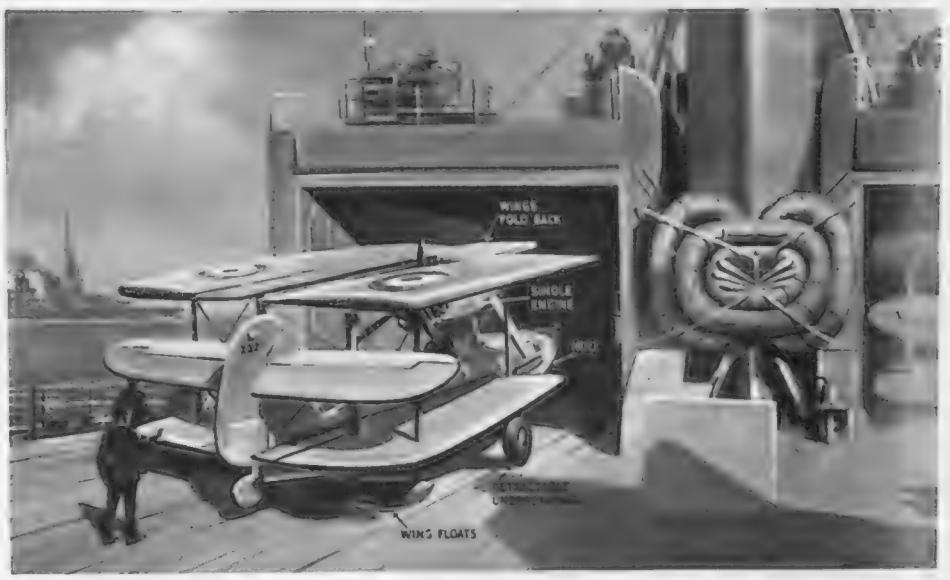
With the aircraft-carrier range and sight mean little: by sending up spotting aircraft she can discover the enemy's presence within a wide radius, and she can then send up bombing or torpedo-dropping aircraft to engage even at long range. It is the pursuit of such tactics which culminated in the successful engagement with the Italian Fleet off Sardinia. The effective range of a torpedo fired from a destroyer would be about 1200 to 1500 yards; the torpedo-dropper can overtake its quarry when outside the destroyer's range and drop its deadly missile almost at will



THE SCENE BELOW DECK, IN ONE OF THE HANGARS OF AN AIRCRAFT-CARRIER : Blackburn Roc fighter of the Fleet Air Arm. This type is a variant of the Blackburn Skua ; it is fitted with Boulton-Paul 4-gun turrets, and is a very powerful aircraft indeed. To the left the method of folding back the wings is seen ; in the centre the position of the 4-gun turret is indicated ; and on the right the general aspect of the fuselage is well brought out. One of the chief problems confronting the designer of aircraft for the Fleet Air Arm is that of the folding wings. This involves quite a surprising number of difficulties

The ROLE of the AIRCRAFT CARRIER (cont.)

A ROUGH SEA FOR AIR OPERATIONS : After seeing this picture it will readily be understood how a rough sea can bring flying operations from the deck of an aircraft-carrier to a stop—even when other conditions are favourable. It would be extremely difficult to take off with the deck of the carrier assuming a different angle at every moment—and practically impossible to land !



ANOTHER PHASE OF FLEET AIR ARM WORK : This drawing shows the deck of a cruiser, with the hangars for the two Vickers Walrus Amphibians which many of these craft now carry. Unlike the aircraft-carrier, these hangars are not below deck—there is not sufficient room. Neither are the aircraft flown off the deck : they are catapulted into the air, and on return alight on the water. The Walrus is a very popular aircraft, but judged by modern standards, it is slow. It acts as the "eyes" of the Navy

TWO STABLE COMPANIONS AT SEA : These two flying boats are Walrus Amphibians : they are of the "pusher" type, and are nice, roomy, comfortable aircraft for reconnaissance duties at sea

PRAISE FOR THEIR LABOURS : Pilots and other personnel of the Fleet Air Arm drawn up on the quarter-deck of an aircraft-carrier to receive the Commanding Officer's congratulations on the efficient work they have been performing

The R.A.F. RAIDS on KIEL HARBOUR

Photographic Evidence of the Damage done to Germany's Naval Harbour as shown by Official Documents

The Air Ministry have released the remarkable "mosaic" pictures reproduced on this and the two following pages, as evidence of the great havoc wrought by the R.A.F. during recent bombing raids. The first photographs (reproduced on the two following pages) were taken on July 3. They could not then be released for tactical reasons. These should now be compared with the pictures below taken a fortnight later. Up to October 9 the R.A.F. had attacked Kiel no fewer than nineteen times. These pictures afford direct proof of the damage done to German shipping during the course of the raids

EVIDENCE OF THE DAMAGE WROUGHT BY THE R.A.F. TO SHIPPING IN KIEL HARBOUR

On the two succeeding pages we publish a large "mosaic" picture built up by R.A.F. photographers after a reconnaissance of Kiel Harbour. With this picture we publish a list analysing and explaining the principal damage done. As further confirmatory evidence of the success of the aerial attacks, we also offer the above picture, which was *taken a fortnight after* the large picture, reproduced on pp. 382-383. This has enabled a further interpretation to be made by the R.A.F.'s photographic experts; their comments are as follows: "The *Scharnhorst* (No. 1 on the big picture overleaf—see also the small key at the top of this page) is still in the floating dock; and the *Lutzow* (No. 3 on the big picture overleaf) in dry dock, the damage to her stern being very apparent. It is interesting to note that the *Graf Zeppelin* (No. 2 in the big picture overleaf) as well as one submarine, one destroyer and one tanker have departed, and that the Hipper class cruiser has swung on her moorings. More interesting still has been the flying of a balloon barrage. With the aid of a stereoscope fourteen balloons can be seen sited round the main dockyards, extending from the Naval Arsenal to the end of the Commercial Port"

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RAID ON KIEL HARBOUR ON JULY 3 LAST: THE OFFICIAL "MOSAIC" PICTURE MADE AFTER AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE BY R
THE KEY MAP ON THE RIGHT AND TO THE LIST PUBLISHED BELOW WILL SHOW THE DAMAGE DONE BY BRITISH BO

The numbers on the picture above correspond with the following:

KEY

1. *Scharnhorst* - - - Battleship, 26,000 tons, 27 knots, in floating dock, undergoing repairs due to previous damage.
2. *Aircraft-carrier* - - 19,250 tons, 32 knots, not yet completed.
3. *Lutzow* - - - - Pocket battleship, 10,000 tons, 26 knots, in dry dock, with stern being repaired.
4. *Hipper Class Cruiser* - 10,000 tons, 32 knots, at Germania Yard, undergoing repair or refit.
5. *Koln Class Cruiser* - 6,000 tons, 32 knots, at Germania Yard, undergoing repair or refit.
6. *Three Submarines* - 750 tons, ocean-going type.
7. *Two Cruiser Minelayers* - 135 ft. New type under construction at Howaldt's Yard.
8. *Four Torpedo-boats* - Wolf or Mowe class.
9. *Three Submarines* - 500 tons sea-going type.
10. *Horst Wessel and Gorchfock* - Sail training-ships.
11. *Destroyer* - - - Roeder or Maas class, in dry dock under repair.
12. *Tanker* - - - - 570 ft. Possibly of special construction for carrying heavy military vehicles.
13. *Tanker* - - - - 570 ft. Ditto.
14. *Liner* - - - - 500 ft. Two funnels. Either *Der Deutsche* or *Sierra Cordoba*, both used in the "Strength through Joy" movement, could make excellent troop-carriers.
15. *Tanker* - - - - 400 ft. This ship had lain at the same mooring since before June 29, 1940.
16. *Liner* - - - - 580 ft. Single funnel. Possibly the Hapag liner *St. Louis* or *Milwaukee*, with the forward funnel removed.
17. *Tanker* - - - - 420 ft. A vessel of remarkably broad beam
18. *Destroyer* - - - Maas or Roeder class. Under construction at Germania Yard.
19. *Submarine* - - - 500 tons, sea-going type. In floating dock.
20. *Two Submarines* - 500 tons, sea-going type.

R THE HARBOUR BY PHOTOGRAPHIC PLANES: REFERENCE TO
BING PLANES

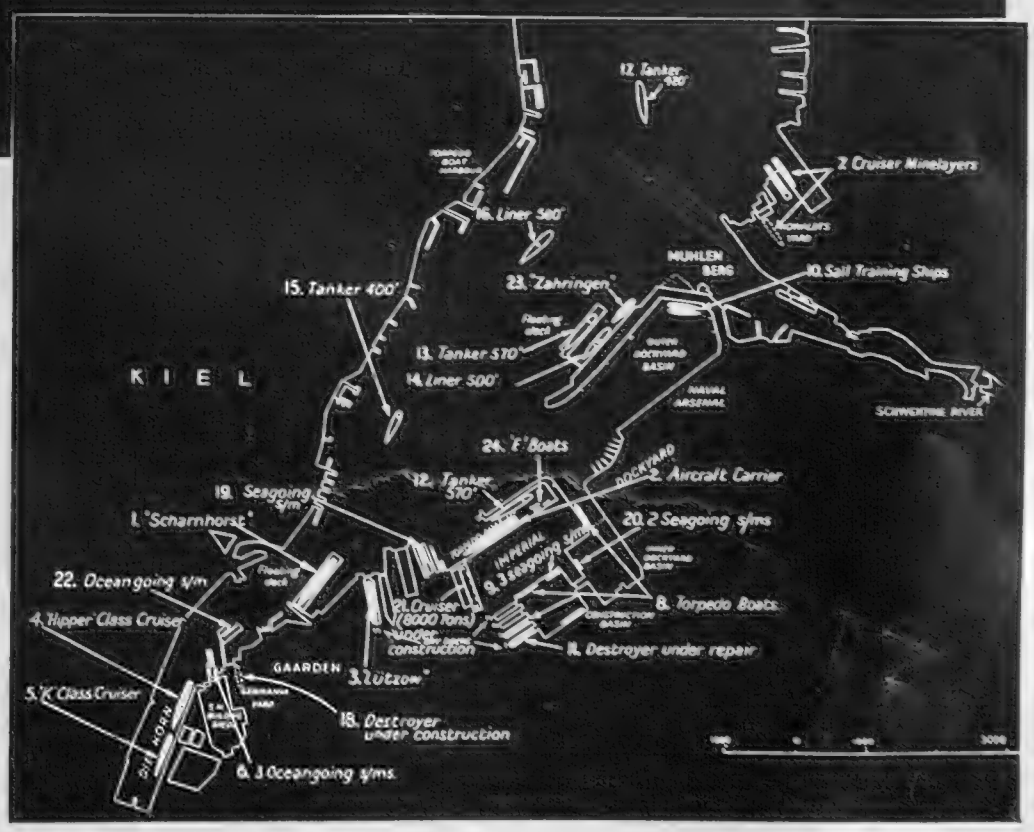
. *Cruiser* - - -	Probably 8,000-ton class (light cruiser), under construction at Deutsche Werke Yard.
. *Submarine* - - -	750 tons, ocean-going type. In floating dock.
. *Zahringen* - - -	Ex-battleship, used as wireless-controlled target-ship.
. *E. Boats* - - -	128 ft. Based in the old torpedo-boat harbour.

SHORE DAMAGE

. Torpedo and Gun Store, damaged by bombing.
B Central Power Station of Deutsche Werke Yard
maged by bombing.

OIL

here is a considerable amount of oil on the water as
result of bombing damage to oil-pipes, from which
oil flowed and caught fire.



A MILE OF PENNIES: The local Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts and Girl Guides of Wadebridge, Cornwall, are untiring in their efforts for the Spitfire Fund. They have collected a mile of pennies and in the space of a very few days have raised over £13

TYPICAL OF LONDON'S WARTIME SHOP WINDOWS: The new shop which has been opened in Bond Street for the sale of Gifts from all over the country in aid of the British Red Cross War Organisation. It is run by Lady Granville

SANTA CLAUS BRIGADE: Some of the 230 young London evacuees to a Southern England town who were recently taken on a shopping expedition by Canadian soldiers. The Canadian brigadier had visited their school and decided to give them a happy day—under military escort!

SLEEPING ON THE JOB: After the show, the stage and dressing rooms of the Threshold Theatre are converted into sleeping quarters for those artists who cannot get home

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

SERIOUS WORKS OF SERIOUS TIMES

J. B. Priestley's Postscripts : A Modern Macaulay : Sir Charles Harington's Memoirs : And Some War Letters to America

I AM very glad to see that the collection of Mr. J. B. Priestley's Sunday night wireless talks has been published. We are all listeners-in, one way or another; including the man who declares he never turns on the beastly thing except for the news occasionally.

Apart from those dramatic first few days of the war, when everybody hung on the news bulletins, waited impatiently for Ministerial statements, and listened with mixed feelings to the torrent of Teutonic hysteria which came across in the unpleasant voice of Hitler (and, of course, excepting the microphone utterances of the present Prime Minister) no broadcaster has commanded such widespread attention as Mr. J. B. Priestley.

Millions of people must have read *The Good Companions*, and many hundreds of thousands his other works. Scores of thousands must have seen his plays and the films upon which his name has been writ large. For years I seem to have been hammering away in this column on various aspects of his literary career. You will notice the diminuendo. It is worthy of note that one of the most potent forces, one of the most considerable figures in contemporary English letters is known to the majority of his countrymen as a broadcaster.

In my experience, an overwhelming majority of people enjoyed Mr. Priestley's postscripts. They liked his voice and his manner. He had just the right touch which appealed to all classes alike. Week by week he told us all exactly what we wanted to hear, and in terms and tones which we all knew and understood. We liked his fearlessness. We liked the way he went baldheaded for the authorities on subjects which some of us found a little difficult to understand. Even when we disagreed with him we still liked him.

POSTSCRIPTS—(Heinemann. 2s. 6d. net) is a collection which he himself says it was never his intention to publish. These talks, ranging from the beginning of June to the end of October in this year, were for broadcasting, and not, as Mr. Priestley says, "to be examined at leisure instead of being caught on the wind every Sunday at 9.15."

I, for one, am very glad that Mr. Priestley has yielded to the requests that they should be published. For they *can* be examined at leisure, and in that examination it can be found that they have lost none of their vigour, none of their point, none of their individuality, and certainly not a jot of their usefulness. Read simply as a record of what we have passed through in those five months, they are of absorbing interest. Some of us may remember with nostalgic interest the night in June when we heard about Two Ton Annie. Those were dark days, although the sun shone high in probably one of the most glorious summer months this country has ever known. Others of us will remember with what mixed feelings we heard Mr. Priestley say on October 20: "This is my last Sunday postscript for some time, perhaps the last I shall ever do." The effect of that statement was to provoke a mass of questions from all over the country. Most of us, while respecting Mr. Priestley's statement that the decision was his own, and was in no way forced upon him by the B.B.C., felt that there might be something more behind it than that. We hoped not, and we still hope that it is not so.

On a set of chambers facing the Rope Walk in that famous and still unspoilt eighteenth-century landmark in Piccadilly known as Albany, is a plaque declaring that Thomas Babington, Lord Macaulay, lived there. In an adjoining set of chambers lives Mr. Arthur Bryant, and I hope that Mr. Bryant will not take it amiss if I am reminded of that juxtaposition by the publication of ENGLISH SAGA (Macmillan. 10s. 6d.). A little more than a hundred years separate these two historians; and while Mr. Bryant is no Macaulay, nor would he wish to be, there is evidence in this book that their literary stature can be measured without departing from too many standards.

Macaulay wrote a famous piece on the state of England before the Revolution. Mr. Bryant's opening chapter on the England of 1840 is comparable to it in scope, brilliance and colour. London at that date was a city of roughly two million inhabitants. Beyond what is now Hyde Park Corner was the countryside, with its chickens, ducks, cows, geese and everything, including scarlet-coated huntsmen and highwaymen on Knight's Bridge.

Britain was just entering that ugly phase which was to bring her industrial supremacy. The policy of empire was about to be developed, and that high-pressure industrial salesman, the Prince Consort, was about to be busy putting the rural economy of this island into the place it was to occupy for a hundred years.

There arose "preachers of peace-at-any-price, pump water, parsimonious pusillanimity, puritanic precision and propriety." Yet there was plenty of gilt on the gingerbread, and brandy-balls for Sunday afternoons, though little girls of ten were crawling through tunnels with chains about their waists that the new plutocracy might wax fat and flourish. Flourish they did, and like the green bay-tree; but the reckoning had to come, and none of the easy, decadent cynicism of the Edwardian *rentiers* could put off the day. Expiation might have been possible in 1914-18 had not the old men and the old ideas taken hold and been drafted into the Treaty of Versailles.

That, roughly—very roughly—is Mr. Bryant's story. As a historian he is on controversial ground; but at least he is aware of it, and is not afraid of his opinions. He belongs to a school of political thought which is not popular in these days; but, popular or not, none can deny, or would want to deny, that this is a brilliant, provocative, picturesque and stimulating book.

General Sir Charles Harington is probably the most brilliant soldier of our own time who never became C.I.G.S. His autobiography—which bears the title TIM HARINGTON LOOKS BACK (Murray. 12s. 6d.)—characteristically reveals how it was that the supreme executive post in the British Army was denied him.

I say characteristically; but though it is apparent that Sir Charles Harington was intrigued out of the job, he neither complains nor comments upon the circumstances. He tells his own story in the simplest language, making no pretence to be a writer, and certainly none to be a stylist. He has been a good cricketer; and seems to have taken even more pleasure in collecting a century or two, or bagging a few wickets than in his considerable professional achievements. Indeed, he is a sportsman in the best sense of the word; and in this very personal record he reveals how a man of character can take his slices of good fortune modestly and his bad fortune without complaint.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book is, of course, the story of Mudania and Chanak. No soldier, and very few of those who collected some temporary military experience in the last war, will fail to appreciate the implications of that chapter, or to note how the direct methods of a soldier of integrity can touch on a near-tragic aspect when politicians take a hand in the game.

LONDON FRONT (Constable. 12s. 6d.) covers a period from August 1939 to July 1940, and is mostly written by Miss F. Tennyson Jesse and her husband, Mr. H. M. Harwood. The book is in the form of letters to various of the authors' friends in America, to Marion Balderston, S. N. Behrman, Carl and Sonya Hovey, Grace Hubble and Alexander Woollcott.

The events with which these letters deal, added to the personal and contemporary reactions of the various writers, are extremely interesting; for, although it all seems to have happened only the day before yesterday, so much has occurred since that already it appears to have passed into history. For instance, it is curious, just now, to read: "Chamberlain has made his speech, and all is well. The feeling of relief is intense, even if it means air raids and all the rest of it." Or, in March 1940: "Musso has an army that doesn't want to fight on the side of the Germans, and probably doesn't want to fight at all; and the Germans crouch like a great cat waiting to spring on the Brenner Pass. Hence the offer of cauliflowers and Carrara marble." And then again: "We are settling down here to the inevitable boredom, grimness and determination of war. I hear that Gort gives it ten years and Gamelin six" (January 1940).

Miss Tennyson Jesse is obviously as good a letter-writer as she is a novelist, and in her correspondence seems to have the same obsession with crime that she has in her literary work. Mr. Harwood supplies the real dramatist's touches, as well as that sense of humour of which he has always been suspected. Some of the pieces of Alexander Woollcott are characteristic; but from the other side the honours go, I think, to Mr. Sam Behrman.

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WAR-TIME ENTERTAINMENT

New Shows for London and the Provinces

A NEW HULBERT SHOW: As genial and energetic as ever, Jack Hulbert puts the cast of *Hulbert's Follies* through their paces in the attic of a Harrogate hotel, for the show to be put on at the Harrogate Opera House. Cicely Courtneidge and Claude Hulbert are seen in the front row

A NEW COMEDY FOR LONDON: Harold French (seated at the back, on right) directing rehearsals for Sam Behrman's new play *No Time for Comedy*, shortly to be put on at the Globe Theatre. The cast includes, from left to right: Diana Wynyard, Lilli Palmer and Rex Harrison

FAME ON TAP: Irene Roberts, a former Civil Service telegraphist, and now a dancer rehearsing for *Aladdin*, at the Coliseum. A few months ago she passed the all-England examination for telegraphists, but decided to tap her way to fame with her feet instead of a telegraph key

AN R.A.F. REVUE: A Flight-Lieutenant with two of the "Leading Ladies," who are R.A.F. men in costume. The show will be put on at the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, in aid of the Air Force funds.

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In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

IN William White's book, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Devonshire*, published in 1850, he writes of Sidmouth: "That it was but an inconsiderable place till about fifty years ago, when it began to put forth its pretentions to cure the evils attendant upon luxury and disease; and if we may judge from the rapid increase of residences and accommodations for that purpose within the last fifteen years, the public seem to have assented to the claim."

Nearly a hundred years has rolled on, and Sidmouth's charm still lies in the salubrity of her climate, her scenic attractions, her unspoiltness, and if Mr. William White was alive to-day he could say that she can put forward pretentions for consideration for a wartime sanctuary.

To descend through those verdant hills which rise boldly 500 ft. above the valley and to emerge on Sidmouth's tiny promenade, is to be transcended into a world of tranquillity which to many of us is but a memory of long ago.

Certainly at the Victoria Hotel, where I was fortunate enough to obtain the only vacant room, one felt very secure in such a first-class fastness. My bedroom overlooking the bay was bright, spacious and restful. My bathroom was a model of perfection. The bath, a deep six-footer, a walled recess to hold the soap, a handle to aid the aged (noted for future years!). Hot towel-rail, a capacious supply of towels—and spotless surroundings.

Having arrived at the Victoria early in the afternoon, I could renew my impressions of a previous visit leisurely and luxuriously. I sank into a deep-seated chair in the lounge, and tea was brought. That tea-tray was a model of everything cared for. Nothing chipped. China, cutlery, teapot, and hot-water jug had obviously spent long on their toilet. Cakes, bread and (it might have been) butter stood up to wartime conditions.

Then came an hour of exploration. First a short constitutional around the peaceful gardens of the Victoria, a stroll along the front, a little nose-flattening against the shop windows—already Christmasy—and so back to the Victoria Hotel, of which there is not the least trace of anything Victorian.

Austerity, formality and frigidity are words quite foreign to the Victoria. There is a friendly reception when one arrives. The staff are ready and anxious to please. There is warmth in the decor, fires burn merrily in the lounges, central heating throughout, and, like the tea-tray, everything about the hotel has that well-cared-for look which denotes good management and sensible directors.

Below stairs, I visited the air-raid shelter: warm, spacious, scientifically planned, and safe. Though there is little likelihood of its use, there is a greater sense of security to know that it is there. Certainly those who sleep at the Victoria can do so seraphically. My bed was a triumphant finish to a half-day of happy impressions. Full marks to the Victoria below stairs, upstairs, and in every department.

If Sidmouth could have accommodated me, I would willingly have sojourned on. I should like to have revisited an old love, the Knowle Hotel, spent a night at the Fortfield, which I only know by day, gained some experience of the Belmont, visited again the Royal York, the Tor Bay, the Royal Glen, and many others, because Sidmouth specialises in good hotels.

But I could not leave Sidmouth without visiting Cedar Shade, a small hotel of unusual distinction. Fortunate are those who stay there. Fortunate that there is not room for more than sixteen to twenty people, for the charm of Cedar Shade lies in its restriction of the size, and the fact that there is always a waiting-list. One does not elect to stay at Cedar Shade, one is selected!

Christmas.—At the time of writing, there are a few double rooms available at Bourne Hall, Bournemouth. The Boscarn Hotel, Looe, has been recently reopened under the personal direction of Mrs. G. Burlingham, and you will probably find some rooms available there. For a quiet Christmas I would also recommend the Hydro Hotel, Falmouth, or the Queen's, Penzance. But for all the fun of the fair, Christmas programme, and so on, I should be tempted myself to catch the night train and stay at the Castle Hotel, Glendevon, in the heart and peacefulness of Perthshire.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS

R. C. T. R., Eastbourne.—You will be very fortunate if you can get accommodation at Woodcote Hotel, Dulverton, but it may be that Miss Jeeves can get you a room out. Though this has disadvantages, it has an advantage in that you appreciate the more the warmth of Woodcote. In winter time it is a little snuggery.

E. G. B., Douglas.—I am sure you would find that Shrewsbury will be full, so I suggest the following places, which I believe should suit you: Hawkstone Park Hotel, Weston-under-Redwood, eleven miles north of Shrewsbury; Lake Vyrnwy Hotel, twenty-five miles west of Shrewsbury; Castle Hotel, Bangor.

Mrs. M., Windsor.—Hotels in and around Oxford are very full up, so I can give you no guarantee that you will be able to get accommodation, especially at Christmas. You might try the following: in Oxford, Linton Lodge, off Banbury Road; Bardwell Court Hotel, off Banbury Road; Kenya House, Boar's Hill, near Oxford; The Crown and Thistle, Abingdon.

H. P. W., Redditch.—The rumours you have heard regarding Tunbridge Wells are quite unfounded. Beyond the usual traffic of planes, and air-raid warnings, the Manager of the Spa Hotel tells me that not one single bomb has been dropped there, "and the best proof," he writes, "is that we are absolutely full up and have not used our shelters for many weeks past." So you can safely ask them to put you on their waiting-list for a vacant double room in the New Year.

Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a 2½d. stamp for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor, THE SPHERE, *32-34, St. Bride Street, London, E.C.4. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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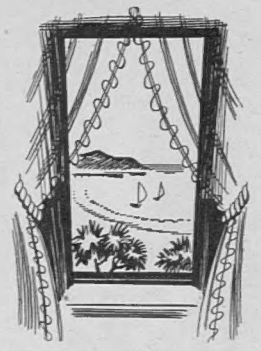

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